Pacifying Lebanon

Violence, Power and Expertise in the Middle East

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For *Γωγώ*, and for *Mataroa*

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Note on Transliteration

The Arabic terms included in this dissertation are transliterated in the simplest form to ensure that the reader can follow the argument and the story without stumbling over words. In most of the cases, the Arabic terms are either widely recognizable or the choice of their transliteration does not change their meaning.

Note on Anonymization

Anthropological work follows the practice of removing any identifying personal information by providing only the necessary contextual background to the reader. However, in an overt research this is not always successful and often the identities of the persons, the institutions and the places can easily be discovered (Atkinson 2001, 341).

In this research I followed a hybrid practice. I chose to anonymize those persons, places and institutions that are directly part of my research field, but it is clear that many of these items are identifiable to those who know the field and to those who may research about it in the future. Finally, I kept the names of those relatively known public persons (e.g. politicians and academics).

Introduction

Expert Utopias

"There will be great storages of force for every city, and for every house if required, and this force man will convert into heat, light, or motion, according to his needs. Is this Utopian? A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realization of Utopias."

Thus read Oscar Wilde's quote on the walls of *Utopia Now*, the private lounge of *Michel I*, self-declared 'Emperor of Nowheristan.' In the time of my fieldwork in Beirut (2007-9), *Nowheristan*, an ambitious political project that sought to abolish borders, passports, nation-states and war on a global scale, beginning from Lebanon, was recruiting virtual supporters through a digital platform on the Internet. *Utopia Now* was located in downtown Beirut, directly adjacent to one of the country's most lavish music clubs, which also belonged to Michel's family. In *Utopia Now,* there were often dinners for Michel's invited friends, many of which were (often self-declared) experts in other domains, such as media, diplomacy, politics, business and, last but not least, anthropology.[1]

Usually, the *Emperor* would wait for us in the mezzanine, standing between the mock torture chamber, a special memory from the *Lebanese Civil War* (1975-1990), and the baroque-style

[1] During my fieldwork in Beirut (2007-2009), I wrote a piece about Michel's extravagant persona and about Nowheristan, his ambitious global project, for a Greek daily (Kosmatopoulos 2008a). After the piece was published, Michel invited me – along with others, who had written about him in the foreign press (including German, French, US and Turkish media) - for dinner. Since then, I became a frequent guest at *Utopia Now* dinners, and used this opportunity to establish relationships with many experts, and informants. In that sense, *Utopia Now* emerged as an essential fieldwork site for this research. In accordance to his habit of over-staging almost everything, Michel used to introduce me to his other guests as a "doctor in anthropology and a Russian spy". He never explained to me the reasons for this label, and I never asked.

leather couch, a special order from England. He would be cloaked in his usual *imperial* attire: black shirt, black trousers, and black cape, decorated with golden embroidery from head to toe. The outfit would be complemented by long, thick brown boots (reminiscent perhaps of his time as a fighter in the last phases of the Civil War), and a wool cap with a Byzantine cross woven onto it (he was, after all, a Greek Orthodox, and the grandson of the Archbishop of Smyrna before the 1922 exodus). For Michel, Oscar Wilde's words were the ticket-to-ride to his own utopian ideal, in which eternal peace would be guaranteed through the rule of several wise men, indeed, experts, in life in general and the *polis* in particular.

Extravaganza notwithstanding, Michel's *Nowheristan* must be counted among the myriad ideas that sought to facilitate and amalgamate Lebanon's return to peace after the 15-year-long Civil War. While some of them were performed within secluded spaces of luxurious clubs in Beirut, others had a much more penetrating effect and a powerful appeal to the entire country. Indeed, post-war Lebanon saw a number of important and ambitious socio-political projects that sought to mend the wounds, repair the cracks, overhaul the loss, and reflect on the experiences of the devastating war.[2] The reconstruction of the destroyed Downtown, the liberation of the occupied South, the recuperation of the 'Disappeared', the preservation of the Memory of the War, the reconciliation of the feuding communities – to name just the essential – were to become both objects of grand visions, as well as issues of major controversy that would dominate public discourse for many years to come.

As in Michel's whimsical appropriation of Plato's *Republic*,[3] experts featured centrally in all of those projects: During the turbulent and hopeful years of the first post-war decade, engineers and architects, employed by the Saudi-Lebanese construction giant *Solidere*, crafted reconstruction

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[2] Throughout the war's duration, more than 100,000 people had been killed, nearly 1,000,000 displaced, around the same number were injured, 17.000 'disappeared' and several billion dollars worth of damage to property and infrastructure sustained. (Ochsenwald and Kingston 2012; Itani and Jalal 1978; Picard 2000; Chaoul 1988; Tabbarah 1979; Picard and Philip 1996; El-Khazen 2000; Salibi 1976; Kliot 1987; Khalidi 1989; Gilmour 1983; Azar and Haddad 1986)

[3] For Plato, the statesman is 'the *epistemon,* he who knows, and he who knows what each is to do because he possesses true knowledge' (Castoriadis 2002, 32).

models for Beirut's historic *centre-ville*; strategists and telecommunication specialists, recruited by the Islamic movement *Hizbollah*, developed secret technologies to counter Israeli military offensives and intelligence. Lawyers and human rights activists, approached by grassroots organizations, such as the *Families of the Disappeared*, provided plans for action and advocacy towards national and international legal and political bodies; Historians and photographers, involved in academic and artistic projects, like the *Beirut Underground*, compiled archives, published books and organized exhibitions on the War. Trainers and psychologists invited by local NGOs and charity foundations, chaired reconciliation meetings in the villages and the mountains throughout the country. Granted, the rhetoric and the hope of peace were informing many aspects of these projects. Yet, in most of the cases, *peace* was indeed understood as the indirect and rather abstract outcome of some very concrete and definite political aims, such as development, liberation, reconciliation, respectively. [4]

In the present work, I explore how, in the years that followed the end of the Lebanese Civil War, this abstract, utopian and ideological imaginary of peace gradually gave way to a distinct, concrete and tangible domain of expert-led discourse and practice. In other words, how a transcendent hope of peace was transformed into a *concrete object* around which diverse forms of techno-political expertise were developed and deployed. Indeed, how peace*,* in and by itself, emerged as an *utopia of experts*, namely, a situation, in which previously abstract *ideals* are transformed into calculable and quantifiable *projects*. The story I tell here shows how a heterogeneous array of diverse techno-political elements, such as epistemological discourses, socio-technical practices, professional trajectories, institutional histories and individual biographies were assembled around the declared aim of pacifying Lebanon, and the wider Middle

[4] On the reconstruction of Beirut's downtown see (Abisaab 2001; Makdisi 1997a; 1997b); On Hizbollah, see Chapter Five; on reconciliation, see Chapter Four; on the Disappeared, see (Barak 2007; Sherry 1997; Wierda, Nassar, and Maalouf 2007; Jaquemet 2009; Young 2000); on the politics of memory and memorialization see (Volk 1994; 2010; Barak 2007).

East. In brief, this is a story of innovation and controversy; hopefully, if Bruno Latour is right, a promising story.[5]

More specifically, the project attempts to answer four interrelated sets of questions:
First and foremost, it explores how peace (and its absence or its fragility) is defined as a **historical fact,** and how experts in different contexts constitute peacemaking as a socio-scientific problem. Which aspects of the problem are selected as significant threats, and which are heralded as opportunities? For instance, how are the 'spillover effects' of 'failed states' (Chapter Two), the 'communal tensions' among the Lebanese (Chapters Two, Four), the proliferation of 'non-state actors' (Ch. Two, Five), the apparent 'support for terrorism' of the population (Ch. Five) identified as *risks*? And vice versa, how does the possibility of a quantifiable version of 'risk' appear as an opportunity for peacemaking (Ch. Five)? On another level, what are the effects of these developments on particular readings of the past and the future of the country, and of the current state of world at large? What other ideas, knowledges, approaches and claims are at the same time overshadowed? What other silences are produced?

Second, it examines the kinds of **innovations** and **controversies** that are constituted while these new forms of expertise are deployed; which already existing features are being taken up in new ways in relation to the problem of peace and peacemaking, and which parts are disputed, and how? On one hand, *innovations* may include the creative refashioning and combination of older models of social engineering and new patterns of scientific production, e.g. workshops and other training techniques (Ch. Four), think tank publications (Ch. Five), academic theories, such as the increasingly overlapping bodies of literature on ethnicity/culture and violence/conflict (Ch. One), the burgeoning scholarship on 'state failure' (Ch. Two), and popularized, quasi-scientific reformulations of 'dialogue' as means of conflict resolution (Ch. Three), forms of organizing

[5] Latour insists that the study of innovations and controversies offers big opportunities for research, because in these cases the different elements that made up *the social* are still visible to the researcher. When the innovations pass and the controversies are settled these elements become invisible, self-evident and thus difficult to flesh out (Latour 2005).

peace-related research in the United Nations' archives (Ch. One), and administrative interrelationships among various entities involved in peacemaking (esp. Ch. Three). On the other hand, *controversies* might erupt in the form of generalized suspicion against innovations, such as the development of peace expertise in the Middle East, and they might, for example, include public debates about the phenomenon of expertise and scholarship about the Islamist movement of Hizbollah (Ch. Five), or academic problematizations over the nature and origins of violence in Lebanon (Ch. One).

Third, it analyzes specific **practices** through which various elements are becoming *actors* in the field. Peace experts, diplomats, mediators, political scientists, think tank analysts and non-governmental organizations are at the same time *origins* and *outcomes* of the efforts to organize coherent and effective forms of the *power to pacify* (s. Ch. Three for a systematic overview). These efforts include, for instance: the redirection of previous audience policies in think tanks to fit new needs, as in the case of the *War on Terror* (Ch. Five), political efforts to negotiate the end of conflicts in luxury settings, such as Track-1 summits in Qatar's capital *Doha* (Ch. Three), adaptation of old peace-making strategies to new realities, such as after the *Camp David Accords* in 1978 (Ch. Three), and the creation of new networks for information sharing and coordination, such as the *Lebanese Conflict Resolution Network* (Ch. Four). How do practices, such as conflict resolution workshops (Ch. Four), crisis reports (Ch. Five), early warning mechanisms (Ch. Five), post-conflict summits (Ch. Three) and UN resolutions (Ch. Three) *act*? How do they assemble other actors (norms, individuals, settings, theories, etc.) around them? What are their limits, the moments and reasons of breakdown and failure?

Fourth, it seeks to develop an **anthropological perspective on the emerging approaches to peace and peacemaking** in Lebanon. It aims to understand what is contingent upon specific practices in Lebanon, and what could be comparable across various models and locations; what novel combinations of features are emerging in different sites, and how the increasingly globalized politics of peace expertise play out in these processes. How does the opening of new

spaces of expertise prompt the proliferation of novel *problem spaces* (Ch. Five), within which particular *anthropological problems*, in relation to the constitution of humanity in moral and political terms, for example, are addressed?

This story is, perhaps, as much about Lebanon as it is about many other parts of the post-Cold War World, which were caught up in turbulent times despite the declaration of the advent of a *New World Order*. Hence, the reader will be able to see that some of the epistemological discourses I explore here are rather products of metropolitan academic production than outcomes of a scientific practice concerned with the issues that matter in the research field (s. Chapter One). Some of the practices I discuss have been tested elsewhere before they were imported into Lebanon (s. Ch. Four). Some of the individual biographies that feature in my story are, so to speak, less transnational than others (e.g. in Ch. Three), and some of the institutional histories I sketch are entangled in structures and priorities far greater than regional developments (s. Ch. Five). Therefore, this work is particularly concerned with the task of tracing the movement of the elements that make up the 'field' across historical periods that may reach beyond the given time frame (1990-2008), and across geographical borders that transcend the country's state borders. I do so, however, without willing to reify these taken-for-granted binaries, such as local/global, internal/external, national/international, traditional/modern, which all too frequently guide our views on contemporary questions about world affairs.

I am, in fact, interested in the exact opposite, namely, in the exploration of those forms of scientific knowledge production, and those modalities of expert practice, that tend to reproduce shallow, but powerful versions of the conventional image of the 'bifurcation of the world' (Mitchell 2002a, 11). In this sense, I adopt a post-colonial perspective, which should, however, not be understood in strictly historical terms. Historical studies of colonialism are particularly insightful, because they can demonstrate, for instance, how Lebanon was integrated in a late and a post-Ottoman colonial order, how particular types of 'colonial subjects' were produced, and, more importantly, how post-colonial effects in the organization of government and the rule over

the society are still with us now (Thompson 2000; Makdisi 2000). Yet, my take of post-colonialism is rather informed by an interest in those forms and contents of knowledge production, such as science, expertise and bureaucracy, upon which a series of administrative, political, social and legal interventions were, and still are, designed in given historical moments (Asad 1995; Foucault 1990; Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1995; Said 1978; Mitchell 1991a; Young 2001). In other words, I understand the *postcolonial* to refer to those forms of critical practice that "address the significance of colonialism in the formation and practice of social theory" (Mitchell 2002a, 7). In this vein, I offer a postcolonial reading of peacemaking in Lebanon. This dissertation is, thus, an ethnography of the socio-historical emergence of *peace* as a distinct object of expertise, with an emphasis on understanding those knowledge-based and knowledge-seeking practices through which UN agencies, professional mediators, peacemaking NGOs, and crisis think tanks (among other actors and organizations) pursue the aim of *pacifying Lebanon*.

Two relatively lengthy caveats are essential at this point. The first is rather analytical/theoretical: Although I speak of *peace* as a distinct expert object, I am rather hesitant to refer to *peace expertise* as a coherent professional 'field,' in the sense of Bourdieu (1993). His theory of the field is a creative adaptation of Max Weber's analyses of different professionals, i.e. academia and politics, through the idea of 'vocation' (Weber 1994). Weber perceived vocations as systematized, rationalized, and bureaucratized expert fields governed by their own rules. In turn, Bourdieu defined a field's autonomy as "its ability to reject external determinants and obey only the specific logic of the field, governed by specific forms of symbolic capital" (1993:15). Bourdieu (1987) further argued that within autonomous fields, authority and legitimacy are constituted both in relation to other neighbouring fields (competition, cooperation), as well as towards other competitors within the same field (strive for monopoly).[6]

[6] For example, Bourdieu describes how, in the field of religious experts, the question of legitimacy was to a great extent treated by the priesthood when the priests managed to postpone the issue of salvation of the parish until the afterlife. By doing so, the

Although Bourdieu's field approach has inspired exceptional works on political and legal experts in the Middle East and South America, for instance, (Eyal 2006; Dezalay and Garth 2002 respectively), there are two reasons for my decision not to apply it to my present work; First, because this would require the conceptual drawing of boundaries and demarcation lines around the 'field' of peace expertise. Yet, not only do I perceive this exercise as somewhat methodologically totalizing, but it also appears as a rather unjustifiable claim on the face of my empirical material, which resolutely resists such framing.[7] Second, because I am not entirely convinced that an explicit focus on *actors* in the conventional sociological sense – such as individuals, institutions, political parties, governments, who are driven by interests, rationality, emotions, calculations, histories – would effectively highlight the complex and convergent nature of the problem under investigation.

Having said that, I nevertheless borrow insights and tools from a significant body of critical appraisals of expertise in both sociology and anthropology. In general, these studies have been preoccupied with essential questions regarding the processes of reproduction of expert fields, and the struggles for hegemony and legitimacy within and beyond these professional fields. For instance, sociological research under the influence of structuralism has shown how expertise is often premised on the production of 'ambivalence' (Merton 1976), while liberal critics argued that 'expert cultures' tend to "colonize life-worlds" (Habermas 1984). Habermas regards our modern lives to be highly technicized through universal principles of cognitive and technical rationality that tend to render science and technology an "ideology" (1970). In a similar vein,

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priesthood achieved a unique position within the field. Since there were hardly any possibilities open to the laity to question the truthfulness and the efficacy of the priesthood's services, the latter secured its authority and overtook other competitors, such as the magician or the prophet who would still have to give evidence of their ability to provide expert knowledge on salvation on a case-by-case basis.

[7] To be fair, Bourdieu was adamant in pointing out the elasticity of boundaries and internal structures, viewing them as open to any transformative challenge from within (e.g. heretical attacks on consecrated authority) or from the outside (e.g. growing commodification, heteronomy towards the economic field). Still, in the end, the social scientist was (or should be) in the position to draw these boundaries.

Giddens's theory of 'reflexive modernization' (1994) states that our epoch is based on the "reflexive ordering and reordering of social relations" in light of the continual influx of knowledge. Echoing Habermas, Stephen Turner claims that such phenomena produce serious political implications for liberal democracy (2003). In our 'knowledge societies,' he warns, where specialized knowledge becomes extremely important in politics, the democratic discussion is seriously "under threat." Further, system-theoretical approaches question the claim that experts produce real knowledge, and thus seek to problematize the idea of knowledge in general (Hitzler, Honer, and Maeder 1994; Lachenmann 1994; Luhmann 1992). Needless to say, there remain studies produced that prefer to treat expertise in positivist terms (Collins and Evans 2007, 2), albeit framing it: 'rethinking expertise'. The proponents of the so-called 'realist approach' share the view that individuals "acquire real and substantive expertise" (ibid.) through their membership in expert groups.

Anthropology has long studied these aspects of the human condition that produce diverse forms of expert knowledge: "The very practice of ethnography entails mapping and representing social distributions of knowledge, including the sites where modes of expertise are practiced and deployed" (Carr 2010, 18). The relatively recent development of the 'anthropology of expertise' has, so far, offered a multitude of insightful work in all possible domains of specialized knowledge. These recent approaches do not focus on what experts *have*, such as different degrees of symbolic capital à la Bourdieu for example, but on what they *do*, such as the practices they deploy and the activities they undertake within their domain of expertise. Further, phenomenological approaches in the 'anthropology of expertise' seek to contextualize both the practices and the every day lives of experts within the socio-cultural environments in which they do what they do. Still, the focus on practices and on phenomenology seems to be subordinated to questions pertaining to the ways that experts secure authority and authentification (Boyer 2005; 2006; 2008; Carr 2010).

Certainly, any inclusion of, say, the classical Malinowskian canoe ethnographies of the 1920s, or the structural analyses of mythology, magic and religion of the 1950's, under the generic label of an 'anthropology of expertise' would most probably be an anachronistic felony. This would not be with the case within more recent ethnographic investigations of today's globalized specialists of care, health, development, humanitarianism and natural science (s. Boyer 2005 and Carr 2010 for an overview). For example, a volume edited by Laura Nader includes a series of ethnographies, which detail Western and non-Western processes of scientific knowledge production and accumulation (Nader 1996). Based on three different approaches, i.e. description of knowledge in 'traditional society,' ethnographic study of Western knowledge, and analytical juxtaposition of 'technoscience' to other knowledge traditions, the volume convincingly argues that science in modernity is crucially entangled with questions of definitional boundaries, which are constantly drawn and re-drawn.

Yet, most of this literature tends to return to the sacredness of the human being as the principal sociological actor. In the present work, I attempt to tell another kind of story, namely, one in which individuals, objects, ideas, and theories are treated somewhat on equal methodological grounds. By this, I do not mean to sketch a depressing image of a world of human actors without will or agency, however. On the contrary, I take my inspiration from pioneering anthropological work on the complex relationship between *human* and *non-human* in the constitution of the *social* (Haraway 1991; Latour 2005), and thus seek to exponentially multiply the sociological agents by introducing a series of *actors* that are very much capable of *action*, without it being the direct result of a rational decision, or, for that matter, of any decision. For example, I treat both the *conflict resolution workshop* and the *think tank report* as significant *actors* respectively. In Chapter Four, I show, among other things, how the *conflict resolution workshop* contributed heavily to the rise of a new moral-technical configuration within civil society in Lebanon, which would place the training of the population at the center of its efforts to deliver genuine peace. In Chapter Five, I demonstrate how the *think tank report* helped to change common understandings about what kinds and what types of knowledge are necessary in order for political elites to

address designated, emerging threats to peace on a global scale. Thus, my analysis suggests that both the workshop and the report could constitute what Latour labels a 'collective': "an action that collects different types of forces woven together because they are different (and which) assembles new entities not yet gathered together" (Latour 2005, 74–75).

Scholarly interest in the social construction of scientific facts has been growing steadily since the mid-1980's (Shapin and Schaffer 1985), and, ever since, diverse problematizations of the human/non-human binary, and its role in the constitution of the *social*, have become very influential to contemporary social science, and, especially, to a section of social science known as *STS – Science and Technology Studies* (Sismondo 2009; Jasanoff 1995). STS scholars have produced a sizeable body of literature around issues of controversy, concern and innovation that intersect science and society, with a special emphasis on those technological developments and expertise that impact different forms of social engineering (in the domains of biological research, security, virology, etc.). Yet, peace and peacemaking as a focus is still conspicuously absent from that list, although it does constitute, I will argue, a formidable domain of social engineering, in which particular forms of knowledge and (social) science play very significant roles. In this study, I attempt to address this lacuna and thus explore the political technologies of peacemaking in their own specificity as devices of social change and action.

The second disclaimer is both analytical and ethical. Although I approach my topic from an anthropological point of inquiry, I do not mean to suggest that the anthropologist is occupying an entirely external position vis-à-vis the issues she is tackling. In a similar vein, I do not suggest that my study is a typical case of 'studying up' (Gusterson 1997; Nader 1972a), because I do not subscribe to a pyramidal model of power, in which anthropologists are necessarily occupying

lower positions compared to other groups of experts.[8] In this sense, I take the position of those currently conducting anthropological research on professionals, whose modes of working and training closely resemble those of the discipline of academic anthropology. Ethnographies of mobile, cosmopolitan subjects, such as foreign correspondents (Hannerz 2004), international lawyers (Dezalay and Garth 1998; 2002) journalists (Boyer 2000), archaeologists (El-Haj 2001), development experts (Mosse 2008), humanitarians (Redfield 2005), and conflict resolution experts (Timura 2004) have prompted anthropologists to further enhance the discipline's tradition of reflexivity (Bourdieu 2004; Clifford and Marcus 1986).

However, it would seem that the methodological approaches that have emerged from this new perspective, namely,'critical ethnography' (Madison 2005), or 'para-ethnography' (Holmes and Marcus 2010) are not able to question the privileged position of the anthropologist vis-a-vis the Other. Not being able to truly disentangle this hierarchy, they suggest either a politics of denunciation (in the case of critical ethnography) or a more enhanced ethics of cooperation (in the case of para-ethnography). In fact, the controversial issues and encompassing phenomena of our contemporary world do not always allow much leeway to the ethnographer to take safe distance, if they ever truly did. In my own fieldwork, I experienced this pressing reality in both possible directions. On the one hand, while conducting a visceral and distressed ethnography on board the *Freedom Gaza Flotilla*, which led to my designation as a 'peace terrorist' by some commentators (cf. Kosmatopoulos 2012); and on the other, as a recognized researcher, employed as a 'peace expert' by an international peacemaking NGO to conduct a baseline study on Lebanon. In both cases, I could not claim any grade of neutrality, let alone distance, towards my research subject.

In general, the emergence of peace expertise in Lebanon (as in many other places, too, albeit in other ways) was not met with ideological consensus and was immediately caught up in a complex

[8] Latour makes this point quite nicely and provocatively about sociology: 'Thus, in spite of what they often claimed, sociologists had always studied down, since the power of science remained on their side and was not itself scrutinized.' (2005, 98)

series of socio-historical controversies, towards which no researcher can claim the status of a neutral and objective outsider, but also which no researcher can ignore (cf. Ch. One, on 'village anthropology *missing the war'*). Hence, when I claim to offer a *critical* analysis of the phenomenon of this historical emergence, my understanding of the term 'critical' should be perceived in terms of a constant questioning of, and even risking, one's own standing at any given moment. To give an example from my own material, I discuss (Ch. Five) how the use of the adjective form (critical) in the case of the so-called *critical terrorism studies* presupposes a position of externality towards the substantive form (terrorism studies). This stance, I argue, is possible and plausible only if one regards *terrorism studies* to be a rather coherent "interstitial space of knowledge production" (Stampnitzky 2010), whose boundaries and demarcation lines are somewhat recognizable and thus easily avoidable by those who may wish to steer away and, thus, view it *critically*. Yet, I suggest that today the institutional and discursive power of the political/epistemological term *terrorism* is much more expansive and influential than a mere reference to a somewhat bounded community, as experts might suggest. Building on previous anthropological theory that borrowed aspects of Foucauldian thought (Rabinow 2002; Collier and Ong 2005), I propose instead that 'terrorism' should be considered a particular *problem-space*, in which contemporary anthropological questions about the constitution of the *human* in moral, political and technical terms are framed.

Arguably, the adaptation of this perspective opens up the possibility of different readings of the term *critical*. Analytically, it enables an emphasis on the inevitably controversial nature of the ways in which the above-mentioned *anthropological questions* are posed and debated. Ethically, it introduces the idea that the researcher must be regarded as part and parcel of the problem-space that is permeated by the controversies at hand, and not as an external observer who may claim analytical distance and the moral high ground usually attributed to the critic. This approach – the most widespread version of which is, as far as I know, Luc Boltanski's *sociology of critique* (Boltanski 2011; Boltanski, Thévenot, and Porter 1991) – not only re-integrates the otherwise

external observer into the controversy, but pays particular attention to the 'critical capacities' of the other participants, who, in my case, are the peace experts themselves.

In this work, I attempt to incorporate these insights. In fact, the entire dissertation is designed, structured and organized as an ethnographic account of the diverse elements that make up the controversy that has emerged around the question of peace expertise in Lebanon since around the early 1990s. Yet, keeping in mind my particular focus on expertise, I must warn the reader that the present account does not focus, but rather treats as background those aspects that view peacemaking either through ideological lenses or in direct relation to particular political formations that have followed peace agreements, such as the Ta'if Accords in Lebanon and the Oslo Accords in Palestine.[9] Granted, these aspects are not only important in regard to the institutionalization of peace expertise (in terms of funding, political backing, societal recognition etc.). They are also quite visible and indeed fiercely fought over within the context, for example, of the age-old debate within the Arab world around the question of *Tatbiyyia* (normalization) of Arab diplomatic, economic and political relations with Zionist Israel.[10]

Particularly in Lebanon, the repercussions of this Arab-wide debate have been manifested in the context of the controversy and generalized suspicion among citizens towards the idea of 'conflict resolution.' For example, Nazim, a previously active member in the *Lebanese Conflict Resolution Network,* noted that to continue working for conflict resolution in the 1990s was "really difficult, because if you spoke about conflict resolution, you would be automatically accused of being with the CIA. If you go to the Palestinian camps, they are going to say 'aha peace with Israel and CIA.' So you had to struggle against this image" (Nazim Interview, Beirut). In Chapter Four, I also refer to the great difficulties that the first practitioners faced in their efforts to secure foreign

[9] For academic accounts of peacemaking efforts in Lebanon that remain within the framework of mainstream political actors, inside or outside the country, see (Barakat 1988; Collings 1994; Hollis and Shehadi 1996).

[10] On the debate on Arab normalization of relations with Israel, see (Shabana 1994; Scham and Lucas 2003; Mi'Ari 1999; Al-Mashat 1983)

funding for their projects. This was largely due to the fact that conflict resolution was not on the agenda of international aid agencies and governments. Despite this, today peace expertise, in its various forms, is an established domain of expertise in Lebanon; critics still express surprise that it exists, adding scornfully, "Lebanon does not need peace experts, because it has already peace" (Lebanese historian Fawwaz Trabulsi Interview, Beirut). That could be true, one may respond, but only in former times, when there were no experts to define what *peace* is, and to decide which countries have it, and which ones should be the next to get it.

Global Peace

On January 31, 1992, the *UN Security Council* commissioned Secretary-General *Boutros Boutros-Ghali* to prepare an "analysis and recommendations on ways of strengthening and making more efficient within the framework and provisions of the Charter the capacity of the United Nations for preventive diplomacy, for peacemaking and for peace-keeping" (Boutros-Ghali 1992). Six months later, on June 17, the UN Secretary-General responded to that request with the launching of the *UN document no. A/47/277 – S/24111*, a.k.a. 'An Agenda for Peace, Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-Keeping' (ibid.). At the core of the *Agenda* was the realization that the "adversarial decades of the Cold War made the original promise of the Organization impossible to fulfil" (ibid.). During those years, "the Organization was crippled," the Secretary-General inserted, but after its end there was a new opportunity that "must not be squandered." His optimism was apparently premised on what he saw as "an unprecedented commitment (of the Security Council) to the Purposes and Principles of the Charter" (ibid.).

Agenda for Peace was the UN major response to an era, which people like George H.W. Bush called 'A New World Order,' or the era of a 'peace dividend,' in Margaret Thatcher's words. During the 1990's, a series of peace agreements – or rather, temporary resolutions of long-standing post-colonial or neo-colonial conflicts – in places such as South Africa, Northern Ireland, Lebanon, and Palestine/Israel, seemed to confirm the optimism. This new confidence was

indeed inscribed in the Agenda, through which global peace was defined anew, especially through the laying out of particular domains (preventive diplomacy, peacemaking etc.),[11] and the declaration of certain aims.[12] Ever since, global peace has emerged as a major international priority (cf. Richmond 2001). For policymakers, politicians, journalists and experts, *peacemaking* became a fundamental interventionist principle in global politics and a significant domain of knowledge production about current affairs.

Yet, the bloody conflict over the division of Yugoslavia, and the Rwanda massacres that followed, proved only to be the shocking tip of a rather disturbing iceberg. Ugly conflicts, genocide, and local wars were the order of the day in a new world that did not seem headed towards peace, let alone towards any sort of order. After the initial shock, academics, including political scientists, psychologists and legal scholars, were called upon to make sense of this new disorder, and to explain why the world was not headed towards the intended goal. Obviously, the old explanatory frame of 'proxy wars,' i.e. small, *hot* wars waged as part of the all-encompassing Cold War did not apply anymore, since there was no superpower left to rival the West. It was around this time that new *problematizations of violence* were urgently needed (s. Ch. One). Arguably, the conflict over Yugoslavia served as the wake-up call upon which the new problematizations of violence were established, the past *Lebanese Civil War* played a special role in these efforts. This role is illustrated by the widespread notion of 'Lebanonization', broadly used to describe bloody ethnic conflicts around the world. As responses to these problematizations, new definitions were crafted, new discourses were circulated, new

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[11] Some definitions: "*Preventive diplomacy* is action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur. *Peacemaking* is action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. *Peace-keeping* is the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, hitherto with the consent of all the parties concerned, normally involving United Nations military and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well." (ibid.)

[12] Some aims: "To seek to identify at the earliest possible stage situations that could produce conflict, and to try through diplomacy to remove the sources of danger before violence results; Where conflict erupts, to engage in peacemaking aimed at resolving the issues that have led to conflict; Through peace-keeping, to work to preserve peace, however fragile, where fighting has been halted and to assist in implementing agreements achieved by the peacemakers" (ibid.)

combinations of old elements were suggested, and, not surprisingly, pundits spoke of 'new wars' (Kaldor 1999). However, most of these new wars, pundits maintained, were, in fact, old conflicts, which were dormant throughout the Cold War. It was only after the superpower confrontation ended that the "lid was open". And, perhaps equally unsurprisingly, these 'new wars' were said to be based on *culture*.

In Chapter One, entitled 'Lebanonizing Lebanon,' I offer an empirical demonstration of the effects that these powerful new problematizations had over academic, and other expert discourses about the Lebanese Civil War and, consequently, the prospects for lasting peace. In particular, I show how this power is premised on a rather circular and tautological argument that goes both ways. In one direction, metropolitan academic discourses depict Lebanon as a paradigmatic case of 'ethnic conflict,' i.e. a conflict that is fought over *culture and identity* in their various manifestations (sect, ethnic group, tribe etc.). In Latour's sense, it can be said that Lebanon was *assembled* as a crucial element in the making of a new scientific paradigm, and thus functioned as major empirical evidence. However, in order for this operation to be concluded successfully, experts had to erase and downplay several socio-historical aspects of the war that did not confirm the suggested label. By the end of this laborious activity, Lebanon could be compared with other paradigmatic cases (which have undergone similar *assessments*), and thus emerge as a local version of a rather global occurrence. In the other direction, the discourse on ethnic conflict could then be imported back into Lebanon as a hegemonic background against which both old and new phenomena of socio-political violence could be explained. This discursive power, I argue, provided the fertile conceptual ground upon which new understandings of both peacemaking and *place making* (e.g. imaginative geographies of peace and crisis) were established. After Lebanon was depicted as a paradigmatic place in which the globalized phenomenon of ethnic conflict could be diagnosed, the remedy could be easily imagined: an equally globalized expertise in peacemaking.

As a result, the metropolitan academic discourse on ethnic conflict, now systematized and

organized around the merging of the bodies of scientific literature on violence and ethnicity, was assembled under a rapidly emerging global politics of peace expertise. As such, it joined a range of actors and organizations, such as the United Nations special bureaus, governmental agencies of development, peacemaking NGOs, diplomats, mediators, crisis think tanks and national intelligence services, which had been tackling the global problem of peacemaking in the spirit of the *Agenda* or otherwise. Book publications on peacemaking, peace building, conflict resolution and transformation were produced in lightning speed; new interdisciplinary journals were launched (e.g. *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*; *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*), and old ones (*Journal for Conflict Resolution, Journal of Peace Research*) were systematically reorganized around the new concepts. New centers for peace and conflict research were established within the United Nations (e.g. the Section for *Emerging and Conflict Related Issues* in Beirut, or the *Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery* in New York). Several specialized think tanks were either created from scratch (e.g. the *International Crisis Group* in Europe) or were revamped to fit into the new situation (e.g. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* in the U.S.). These Western think tanks went *global* with branch offices in the Middle East (especially in Beirut), Far East, Russia, etc.

The once marginal field of peace studies in Western academia boomed, and funds in universities and research centers for scientific research on peace were now ample. Peace scholarship emerged as an acceptable and recognizable academic domain, in contrast to the suspiciousness with which it was enveloped during the Cold War.[13] Among peace scholars, it was widely agreed that "peace research has things to say" about a majority of the "international community's approaches to contemporary violent conflict" (Rogers and Ramsbotham 1999, 754). Indeed, the academic literature on peace, peace-building and peacemaking has enjoyed a renaissance since the end of

[13] Arguably, the controversy and suspicion by political elites in the Anglo-Saxon world over the use of the word 'peace' as a political slogan is the main reason behind the development of peace studies mostly only in Northern Europe (Norway, Sweden and Germany). Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung, today considered a guru in the field, is one of the few theorists to have started a sociological tradition back in the 1960s (Galtung 1972; 1985 1996; Webel and Galtung 2007). On the history of the institutionalization of peace in the United Nations see (Mazower 2009; Arcidiacono 2006; Arcidiacono 2005).

the Cold War (Woodhouse and Ramsbotham 2000; Tschirgi 2004; Reisman 1994; Presler and Scholz 2000; Pearce 2005; Paffenholz and Spurk 2006a; Orjuela 2008; Murithi 2009; McKay and Mazurana 2001; Durch 1993; Cousens, Kumar, and Wermester 2001). This literature is divided into different *schools*, such as the realists, the liberals/functionalists, the pluralists and the structuralists (cf. Richmond 2001). For example, the realist school adopts the mainstream political science framework that regards peacemaking almost exclusively within the conceptual realm of the state, and in relation to concepts such as sovereignty, territoriality, and security. The liberal school focuses on inter-governmental organizations as agents of peace. The pluralists argue for a bottom-up approach, and the inclusion of citizens in peace-related issues, while the structuralists focus on peace in close relation to social and economic justice. Yet, despite differences, these approaches remain within a normative framework that regards peacemaking as the intended result of certain actors and institutions, and argues about which of them must be preferred over others. A much smaller body of literature follows similar trends and addresses the possibilities of peace-making in Lebanon. Some are vernacular critiques of conflict resolution offering rather culturalist readings of local (i.e. Arab or 'Islamic') reconciliation techniques (Irani 1999; Salem 1993). Others are mostly policy-oriented papers, whose normative approach is premised on a number of assumptions, e.g. about the sectarian nature of violence, the weakness of the state, and the institutionalization of peacemaking in Lebanon (Safa 2007; Kraft et al. 2008; Bloch-Jorgensen, Jensen, and Vinggaard 2006; Abi-Ezzi 2008). This dissertation seeks to contest these assumptions.

In this work, I attempt to problematize both normative and actor-centric perspectives on peace-making. Hence, I take up an earlier invitation by Amitav Ghosh to engage ethnographically, for example, in line with peace-keeping conceived of as an 'anthropology of the future' (Ghosh 1994). Yet, this task can only be undertaken after the effects and the conditions of possibility of normative state-centrism have been rendered visible. This is precisely what I pursue in Chapter Two, titled 'Lebanon's Leviathan,' in which I argue that a sizable amount of academic and policy-oriented literature on socio-political violence in Lebanon could be said to have rendered

the country a 'prestige zone' (Appadurai 1986a) for theorizing on the powerful image of the 'Leviathan,' the Hobbesian idea that a secular social order is achievable only within a strong sovereign state. Building on the insights of the anthropology of the state, I then illustrate the necessity for a critical assessment of contemporary expert discourses on 'state failure', and address the metaphor of the failed Leviathan as an empirical question. In doing this, I seek to explore its productivity as an applied expert category, and to highlight both the conditions of its construction and dissemination, as well as some of the particular effects of its application.

To be sure, the world-changing developments that resulted in the emergence of global peacemaking as an acceptable and favorable domain of imagination, practice and knowledge were not taken for granted by all. Anthropologists, traditionally suspicious of *global designs* and their impact on *local lifeworlds* (Randeria 2007), quickly noted that such a universal project that seeks to institutionalize global peace warrants critical scrutiny as well, as it is anything but self-evident. Thus, studies addressed the phenomenon from what their authors perceived as an anthropological perspective. The risk of oversimplification notwithstanding, I would suggest that these studies could be largely classified into two main categories, i.e. cross-cultural correctives and cultural-relativist critiques. The former approach is usually informed by the assumption that anthropology could (and should) contribute to such global designs by way of smoothing their eurocentric angles. Thus, it advocates for a culturally sensitive adaptation of peacemaking logics and techniques to local peculiarities. Therefore, anthropology as the discipline of 'culture' par excellence is regarded as instrumental in this corrective effort (Sponsel and Gregor 1994; Turner, Paul and Pitt 1989; Anon. 1990; Kao 2004; Mahmood 2003; Howell and Roy 1990; Black and Avruch 1993; Avruch 2007).

On the other hand, cultural-relativist critiques adopt a critical stance that tends not only to reject the intervenionist character of global designs (Clapham 1998; Zittelmann 2001; Rubinstein 2003; 2005), but also, and mainly, seeks to question the theoretical and analytical principles upon which it is premised (Richards 2004a; 2004b; Elwert 2002). The proponents of this approach apply

anthropological methodology and theory to explore the unsuitability of universal designs in a variety of particular contexts, and finally to denounce them as insensitive and intrusive. Although I tend to be more sympathetic to the latter approach, I maintain that in order to best understand the practical, political and moral implications of the emergence of global peace-making we must treat it as an object of empirical enquiry with the analytical seriousness and devotion that its political and theoretical significance require.

Perhaps then, the first step in this direction would be to avoid the temptation of adopting any prefabricated assumptions that may regard the phenomenon at hand as coherent and unequivocal. This present work suggests that one way forward would be to follow the path suggested by a handful of anthropologists, who sought to apply a post-structuralist perspective to their study of other globalized discourses, such as development, health, humanitarianism. It is my contention that ethnographies of contemporary global regimes of expert politics in general have much to offer to the study of global peace expertise in particular. I refer, for example, to rich anthropological insights on 'development' that have shown the depoliticizing and hegemonic effects of expertise to complex issues of structural violence and inequality (Escobar 1995; 1997; Ferguson 1990). Further, anthropologists have demonstrated the significance of studying the interaction of institutional forms, discursive aims and modes of translation within the context of globalization on topics such as international aid (Mosse and Lewis 2005; Mosse 2008), human rights (Messer 1995;1993; Goodale 2006), law (Merry 2006; 1992), and health (Janes and Corbett 2009; Strathern and Stewart 1999).

In my own work, I make extensive use of this strand of scholarship. Thus, I adopt an analytical perspective that focuses on questions regarding both the details of historical emergence and the modes of institutionalization of certain prevailing practices in relation to peacemaking. However, unlike most of the existing literature in this domain, I do not embark upon a general description of the principles, strategies and main actors of the 'field', either from a normative, or from a faultfinding perspective. Rather, I focus on the particular responses to the problems related to

peace-making, which do not necessarily belong to certain actors – academics, activists, NGOs, think tanks, United Nations agencies, national governments and peace experts in particular, but they are rather understood in *their own* specificity, and within *their own* dynamic. This stance is crucial for yet another reason that is directly related to the particular contours that the controversy around peacemaking assumes in the context of the Middle East. Keeping in mind that this region has been (and still is) the primary object of Western intervention for the last 200 years, the suspicion over 'peace' in Lebanon should also be understood within a broader historical context, and not only within the debate over normalization (*Tatbiyya*). In fact, many people in the region regard it as yet one more historical form of Western intervention, at worst and, at best, one more 'industry' (Alpher et al. 2007).

To be sure, this view is widely shared by many commentators and citizens in the Arab World. Nihal, a female Arab researcher who works for a Western peace and crisis think tank in Beirut, offered a pretty straightforward formulation to me:

> "It's an industry, just like the peace process. I don't know, we keep creating industries, now conflict resolution, if you look into how many conflicts they have resolved. It's again one way of reproducing the conflict as a matter of fact, rather than resolving it. In the Middle East is all about that, is all about managing the crisis, not trying to find any final resolution for any country. From the Oslo agreement to the road map, one thing relates to the other, what's the latest thing, Annapolis? I think it's a PR thing. Whenever an American president is in a crisis or an Israeli president is in a crisis, some consensus against Iran or against Iraq…. (Unfinished sentence). To me conflict resolution is just like gender issues: it's not about resolving the conflict at all, it's about anything but that. *It's creating an industry to make more money, to make more power relationships, more Westerners coming and telling local people (what to do)*. …" (Nihal interview, Beirut, emphasis added).

Nihal situates the expert discourse on conflict resolution within what she regards as a long series of popular Western discourses (peace process, gender equality etc.) that penetrated the Middle East, and were subsequently transformed into cottage industries. In her view, "industry" means mainly three things: more money for some, more power for the West, and more experts from the West to dictate what is to be done in the region. In brief, peacemaking must be regarded as yet another imperialist plan.

This last remark was not meant to sound ironic, or allude to a conspiratorial position. Views, such as those expressed by Nihal, must be taken very seriously, not only because they are pervasive across the entire region, but also because they are embedded within a historical experience of intervention and hegemony that cannot be ignored in any comprehensive encounter with the issue at hand. Indeed, *who*-questions should not be regarded as steps towards a conspiracy theory, but as a legitimate set of research questions: *Who* is pushing forward the agenda for this particular version of peacemaking (in a concrete, as well as in an abstract sense)? *Who* is producing the means (decisions, definitions, practices, funding, institutions etc.) for the institutionalization of this kind of peacemaking? *Who* is gaining more influence, and more power through the dissemination of the discourse on peacemaking on a global scale? And by extension, *who* is not represented equally within this discourse? *Who* experiences voicelessness and subalternity through the spread of this particular version of an ideology of peacemaking? *Who* is controlled and ultimately subjugated by what Laura Nader called the 'Harmony Ideology' (1997; 1991)?

These are the sorts of questions that Nader asks in her powerful account of disputing processes among the Talean Zapotec (1991). Based on ethnographic material and historical archives that date back to the time of the first missionaries, she argues that 'harmony ideologies' can be used to "suppress peoples by socializing them toward conformity in colonial contexts, or they may be used to resist external control" (ibid. 291). In the end, harmony works for the benefit of the ruling elites: "Both traditional and new elites use harmony ideologies to justify control" (ibid., 296). Nader's illustrative story weaves together missionaries, tribe rulers, and contemporary social

scientists and finally presents them as the ones *who* introduced, disseminated and developed (the ideology of) a 'culture of harmony' as part of a "larger hegemonic force" (ibid.). On the face of these forces, Nader regards the critical social scientist, or the anthropologist for that matter, as the one *who* will take upon herself the task of "unpacking the ideas of harmony" (ibid.). The analytical tools of anthropology enable the ideology of harmony to be "broken down into its various components in order to understand its meaning and controlling power" (ibid.291).

Nader's legacy is important to this present work. It is so, not only because she engaged theoretically with similar questions to mine, namely, the study of the 'ideology' (though, if we must call it something, I prefer to call it 'discourse') of peace and conflict resolution from an anthropological perspective, thereby prompting me to formulate my own theoretical approach in contradistinction to hers; Also not only because two of her students produced the first dissertations on processes of 'traditional' conflict resolution in Lebanese villages (see Chapter One). Nader's work is very relevant, because she used the insights that she gained from her research among the Zapotec to question the ideology of harmony in the heart of the Western world as it was unravelled, for instance, in the debate over ADR (*Alternative Dispute Resolution*) in the United States in the mid-1960s onwards (Nader 1972b; 1979; 1980; Nader and Grande 2002). It was in this socio-political context that her work acquired an urgent relevancy, and brought wider audiences in the US and elsewhere to realize *who* was constituting the "variety of strange bedfellows with mixed motives" behind the introduction of the ADR as a policy that embodied harmony ideology: "businessmen, lawyers, judges, psychologists, and religious people and laymen" (ibid., 306).

In fact, the theoretical argument of Chapter Four, titled 'An Uncivil Society,' simultaneously exposes Nader's influence on my own work, but also the crucial differences in our respective perspectives. In this chapter, I examine the role of peace expertise in the development of a new technical-ethical configuration that has made the 'conflict resolution workshop' the dominant practice of peace NGOs in their attempts to address past injustices inflicted on citizens by state

and para-state agencies in Lebanon. Further, I explore the effects of the widespread institutionalization of the workshop on the efforts to build a new post-Civil War society. I argue that the technology of the workshop introduced a particular understanding of peacemaking, which was mainly premised on training the population in the 'skills' and the 'values' of peace. This had at least three unintended effects: First, a gradual shift in the ways and aims around which the traditionally strong anti-war movement in Lebanon was organized. The most significant of these is what I call processes of 'de-juridification of politics,' i.e. a turn away from the legal field as a primary site for seeking justice against past state repression or protection against future ones. Second, the consistent construction of the perception of an 'uncivil society,'- that is, a politically backward and potentially violent population, which has to be trained. Third, the (re-) production of a professionalized field of 'peacemaking NGOs,' whose degree of legitimacy and conditions of institutional existence crucially depended on the constant need to reiterate the binary between an 'uncivil society' and themselves.

In other words, my intention in the chapter was to highlight *how* the 'workshop' constituted a crucial element, indeed an *actant* in the Latourian sense, within the complex and multi-dimensional grid of the political techniques of peacemaking in post-war Lebanon. Hence, although my story involves many different *whos* (e.g. peace missionaries, Lebanese political scientists trained in the U.S., legal scholars, trainers of conflict resolution), I place emphasis on the question of *how* the workshop introduced new forms of subjectivity and new forms of power relations, and, in that sense, new forms of power relations between new forms of *whos*: subjects (trainers) versus objects (trainees) of conflict resolution, or, in other words, peace experts versus an 'uncivil society'. In brief, I am concerned with those techniques of framing and formatting that are invested and organized around a particular *telos,* and which produce particular forms of *subjects*. In chapter Three, I show, for example, the amount of work, and the diversity of elements (scientific theories, technical readings of 'dialogue,' special arrangements of time and place, introduction of certain rules of secrecy), that are *assembled* in order to achieve the desired and declared *telos* of the peace summit: to let the rational argument out, and thereby, construct the

subject of the *rational ruler*. In more general terms, I believe that an analysis based on the Foucauldian categories of *object, subject, techniques and telos*, illustrates that the actors (*who*) are indeed constituted by the practice (*how*), and not vice versa. Arguably, the difference in the ways in which these questions are posed and asked (*who* vs. *how*) in Nader's accounts, and the present one, reflects a fundamental divergence in the ways that 'power' is theorized and perceived.

Needless to say, this is not a minor theoretical issue. Therefore, I devote my strategic chapter to it entirely. Chapter Three, titled 'The Power To Pacify', looks specifically at those practices that peace experts, among others, deploy in order to address, in a *productive way*, what they see as symptoms or causes of socio-political violence. Here, I stress that peace expertise should not be perceived as part of *reactive efforts* to establish order, justify control, and guarantee the stability, and the continuation of the ruling system, by facilitating the smooth transition to normalcy after crises, for example. This might be the Naderian perspective. Peace and other experts would be denounced, ultimately, as those *who* use rhetoric and practical means to guarantee that the previous power relations remain intact. Yet, drawing on the work of scholars such as Michel Foucault (1995), Nikolas Rose (Rose and Miller 1992), Timothy Mitchell (2002a), Stephen Collier (2009) and others, I prefer to analyze (peace) expertise as the sum of specific 'political technologies' that are organically embedded in more general and *productive* – as opposed to *repressive* – ways of exercising modern (pacifying) power. In the chapter, I explore how the emergence of peace expertise has set off a new configuration of active power that produces new forms of knowledge, forms new types of subjects, and invites new kinds of expertise.

The aim of approaching the emergence of peace expertise through the analytical framework of technologies of power, i.e. 'technopolitics' (Mitchell 2002), is promising because it directs us to look at crucial sites of intersection, such as those between popularized, quasi-scientific ideas of 'rational choice theory' in peacemaking, technicalized forms of 'dialogue', and new expert types, such as the mediator (Ch. Three). Further, a 'topological' analysis of power (Collier 2009)

cautions us against any presumption of systematicity and saturation. Rather, it introduces the idea of heterogeneous and diverse 'patterns of correlation' among different technologies of power (e.g. discipline, sovereignty, security, if we wish to stay within Foucauldian terminology). For example, in Chapter Five, I make use of this differentiated grid to show how the *problem space* of 'terrorism' is organized and permeated by two distinct logics of knowledge as power. The first logic, which I label 'conquest,' is frequently associated with the idea that terror is, in fact, a fight over the conquest of territory, in which the latter is perceived either in strictly military, or in symbolic and discursive terms. This logic introduces the use of knowledge as a *weapon* in that war. The second logic, which I label 'circulation,' designates knowledge on terrorism and crisis as a resource that must be produced locally and must circulate trans-locally, beyond the control of states and without any other restrictions. It delineates, I submit, a *laisser faire* approach to expert knowledge and has wider moral and political implications.

On another level, the discourse on terrorism and the material realities of the U.S.-led *War On Terror* have been transforming the entire region of the Middle East with tremendous speed and momentum since the 9/11 attacks. In this work, I show, for instance, how 'terrorism' introduced fundamental shifts in the ways that expertise on peace and peacemaking were organized around different technical concepts of knowledge, and economizing principles of humanity. It is also in that specific sense that I would regard this work within the tradition of a number of recent studies that have systematically analyzed the Middle East within the context of colonial intervention (Mitchell 1988; 2002), and of the post-colonial politics of knowledge (Mitchell 2003; Khalidi 1998, 2003). Undoubtedly, these studies have helped to constitute the domain of expertise in politics, administration, and the social sciences as a research agenda in its own right. Particularly in the Middle East, anthropologists, such as Nadia Abu El-Haj, and sociologists, such as Gil Eyal, have highlighted the role of experts in complex state-led processes of ruling subject populations (Eyal 2006), and the construction of nationalism through archaeological practice (El-Haj 2001). This dissertation makes use of many of these innovative tools and approaches as well as the theoretical frameworks and methodological paths proposed and pursued by these scholars.

For example, in my explorations of the discursive practices that induce peace experts to depict the Lebanese state as a 'failed state' (Ch. Two), I take inspiration from Gil Eyal's discussion on the ways in which Israeli state experts on Arab affairs constituted the *Arab village* as a 'discursive object' (Eyal, 2006:152). Eyal breaks down this expert discourse into two specific features: *space,* analyzed according to the distinction between traditional 'core' and modern 'periphery,' and *tribe* (ar. *Hamula*), perceived as the main token of the social structure of the village. Hence, while in the beginning, the Arab village was constituted as an object by the military government, it enhanced its function after it was taken up by other experts. It became an active conceptual filter that would inform the definitions and the contrast value of greater notions, such as modern, traditional, rational, material etc. (ibid., 167). Arguably, the analytical value of this perspective is high, because it allows the analytical focus on a number of different levels and processes at the same time.

First, it draws attention to the ways through which experts constitute certain items as 'discursive objects,' by asking, for example, what kind of discursive features do they use, and how do they compartmentalize these objects into different zones of expert jurisdiction. Second, it emphasizes the importance of such processes of discursive designation for the constitution and contextualization of broader notions that may be otherwise taken for granted. Let me give two examples of this use in my own work. First, I discuss in Chapter Four how the introduction of the conflict resolution workshop into Lebanon contributed to a particular reading of 'civil society'. This was thus not only depicted as *uncivil,* and, consequently, in dire need of re-education, but also as in conceptual contrast to the ruling elites, who were regarded as hostile to each other, but as rational altogether. Second, I highlight, in Chapter Five, how the expert domain 'Hizbollah literature' was primarily organized around the logic of surveillance over the unruly and mysterious Other of Lebanese and Western politics. To be sure, different kinds of expert practices treated the phenomenon of Hizbollah in different ways. However, much of this treatment revoked the term 'non-state actor,' which, I argue, defines, by means of contrast, broader discursive notions in Lebanese politics, such as the *state*, for example.

On June 25, 2009 (6:30 a.m. EST) CNN´s *American Morning* aired a 'new study' suggesting that the global recession has led to "more violence and political instability around the world". Two CNN journalists (based in Atlanta and London respectively) debated the "most dangerous and safest countries" in the world, while the label 'Global Peace Index' appeared at the lower part of the TV screen. The Atlanta-based journalist insisted that "we are talking about hotspots" and wanted to know more about "where are we most in danger right now around the world." The London-based reporter "had the story". He begun with a brief, but chilling, introduction to the *Global Peace Index* by way of connecting financial crisis, high food prices, inaccessibility to food, government instability, mass demonstrations and political violence. Afterwards, Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan were announced as the 'least peaceful' countries in the world today.[14] These 'findings' were left largely uncommented by both journalists, as if they were self-evident and somewhat expected. At the same time, vivid images of war and violence, such as cars ablaze in the distance, flashed across the screen. The next question concerned the place of the U.S. on the list. London gave the following answer: "Well, the U.S. went up just a few spots since last year! Right now, they are at number 86 out of 144 counties. So it is still pretty low down (…) the report says that they consider things like access to weapons, a large US prison population, the fact that US is militarily engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan (…) Those are some of the reasons why the US wasn't actually higher up on that list."

Again, further comments are spared and the attention shifts towards the winners of the Index. Atlanta wants to know about "the most peaceful countries", and London presents *New Zealand* to be the "safest, or the most peaceful country." The background images shift to portray rich and healthy natural landscapes, such as dense forests, crystal waters, and wooden bridges, alluding to the Oceanic country. From this moment onwards, the entire program shifts tone and style: it

[14] According to the Global Peace Index in 2008, Lebanon is in 8th place, behind these countries.

focuses on the provision of tourist information to the viewers, in case someone wanted to "plan a trip there." This information includes the following: first, that the name *New Zealand* stands for the 'land of the long white cloud,' second, that one can "seriously see clouds like that" in New Zealand, third, that *The Lord of the Rings* was, "in fact", filmed in the country, fourth, that *bungee jumping* came from New Zealand and, fifth, that it is the first country in the world to see the sunrise. Finally, the Atlanta-based journalist reveals that some of her Nepalese relatives live in New Zealand, so she would even have a "place to stay"! And the London colleague concludes his reporting on the Global Peace Index with a celebratory tone about its champion: "So, good day for New Zealand, plan a trip." Finally, a third colleague, who was about to present the next news item, wraps it up: "Actually, I have been to New Zealand for bungee jumping some years ago. I had a great, amazing, amazing time!"

How can we make sense of this unexpected *happy end* to a broadcast initially concerned with the world's *hotspots*? What can this sudden transformation of an alleged panorama of humanity's contemporary state of turmoil into an explicit advertisement of New Zealand's wild nature tell us about the ways in which imaginaries of violence are disseminated today? If horrific images of *extremist actions* in some countries are immediately followed by direct invitations to *extreme sports* in other countries, how do contemporary imaginaries negotiate and translate crisis and leisure on a global scale? How is the division of the globe into zones of peace and tourism, on one hand, and risk and turmoil, on the other, constituted? And finally, how are crucial notions, such as peacefulness, threat and crisis conceptualized as phenomena that can be calculated, quantified and graded?

Another important argument of this present work is that the expansion and widespread institutionalization of the politics of peace expertise on a global scale not only introduced, or, at least, reinforced the influence of novel principles of morality in debates over human rights, genocide and intervention, for example, and of new political doctrines, in discussions over ethnic conflict and terrorism, for instance; It also advanced a certain set of *imaginary geographies of peace and crisis*, as well as a particular *politics of calculation* that went with it. Within these

expanding imaginaries of peace and crisis, places like Lebanon played a crucial role, because they were constituted as easily recognized 'discursive objects'. In this present work, I explore the question of the imaginary geographies of peace and crisis through different perspectives, trying always to trace the practical and discursive consequences of the constitution of Lebanon as an imagined *locus* of perpetual crisis and potential peacemaking. Let me give two examples of this:

First, the concept of the 'zones of peace', as it is used in UN jargon before and after 1990. My survey at the UN archives in Geneva revealed that this trope was widely introduced into the United Nations official language as late as 1989. As such, it was synonymous with the previously widespread notion of the 'nuclear-weapon-free zones.' In 1989, the annually published *Disarmament Report,* instead of the standard formulation 'Nuclear-weapon-free zones,' featured the combined term 'Nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace.' Note that within the old UN discourse of nuclear disarmament, the term 'zones of peace' was exclusively applied to delineate those geographical regions in which nuclear weapons were absolutely absent. Thus, there were only two *zones of peace* recognized by the U.N., namely, the Indian Ocean and the South Atlantic (UN Disarmament Report 1989, p.183). However, the 1990's brought essential changes in the ways in which the same label came to be perceived within and outside of the U.N.. In particular, an influential book argued against a geography of peace based on the absence of nuclear weapons (Singer and Wildavsky 1993). Instead, the authors suggested that the 'real world order' is comprised of *peace zones* that, however, must be identified by the mere absence of open socio-political violence. This new definition largely coincided with the countries of the Northern hemisphere, and by contrast, 'zones of turmoil' were mostly located in the Global South. My review of the academic writing on Lebanon conflict demonstrates the transformative power of these new geographies in a number of crucial domains beyond the UN.

Second, in chapter Five, I highlight the practical and discursive effects of a particular instrumentalization of expert knowledge on political crises (e.g. intra-state conflict, terrorism, genocidal violence etc.) in think tank reports, which are perceived as mechanisms of alertness and warning on a global scale, such as the monthly *Crisis Watch* by International Crisis Group. I

argue that for expert knowledge to be effective as a wake-up call for immediate political action on impeding crises at a global level, it must be articulated accordingly within a calculable image of *risk*. In the section entitled 'A world at Risk', I emphasize a crucial link between an image of the globe divided into 'critical regions' and increasingly quantified perceptions of risk. As a result, a certain quantifiable geography of risk is made possible, whose *critical cases* are effectively placed under complex forms of surveillance (e.g. local research teams, information networks, etc.), and are assessed through measurable parameters of alertness. Such devices do not divide the world into 'zones of peace' and zones of turmoil, as with the U.N. jargon on disarmament above. Instead, they divide the globe into *cold* and *hot* zones, and then again the hot zones are divided into *zones of lower risk* and *zones of higher risk*. The idea behind this mechanism is to increase the ability to foretell the sudden transformation of low risk zones to high risk ones, and then organize intervention accordingly. As I also highlight, Lebanon often serves as the operational ground for the instalment of such mechanisms of early warning for the entire Middle East.

I show how contemporary imaginary geographies of peace and crisis identify Lebanon as a troubled *hot-spot*, an exemplary 'critical case', and sometimes a 'paradox' that is confusing due to its ability to *work* despite ongoing crisis.[15] By and large, since the Civil War, Lebanon is perceived as being a country in a constant state of *crisis.*[16] Yet, the use of the concept by laymen and experts alike must be explained here. I submit that Lebanon's crisis is frequently analyzed with the help of categories and tropes that allude to *failure*, *lack* and, less frequently, *threat*. For example, Lebanon is often perceived as *lacking* essential elements that guarantee a functioning state, such as strong institutions, e.g. an army, and a unified sense of citizenship among the

[15] I allude here to the well-known argument made by French political scientists Daloz and Chabal about the state in Africa, which is encapsulated in the telling title of their book 'Africa Works' (Chabal and Daloz 1999a).

[16] To my knowledge, the notion was used for the first time in the events of 1958, in which the US Marines landed in the country to support the president of Lebanon in a confrontation over social policy (Qubain 1961). The first academic publication after the eruption of the 1975 Civil War was entitled 'Essays on the Crisis in Lebanon' (Owen 1976). Ever since, the notion has enjoyed widespread use in all possible versions (Dekmejian 1978; Suleiman 1972; Rouleau 1975; Makhzoumi 2010; Haley, Snider, and Bannerman 1979; Farsoun 1973; Hudson 1976). For a more analytic overview on the historical uses of the term 'crisis' in a multitude of domains in western thought, see further below.

population. These and other discursive practices by experts contribute to the image of the *failure* of the state, as my analysis of Lebanon's *failed Leviathan* shows in Chapter Two. Further, the presence of 'non-state actors' in the country is identified as a major *threat* not only to the state in Lebanon, but also to the international order at large. Throughout the dissertation, I attempt to show how particular perceptions of crisis, threat and danger in relation to Lebanon are constantly remolded in diverse documents, such as United Nations non-papers, NGO questionnaires and think tank reports, and how this 'crisis imaginary' is reproduced through institutional fori, discursive loci and strategic actors, such as politicians, experts, bureaucrats and social scientists, both within and outside Lebanon. In brief, by focusing analytical attention on these processes, I seek to understand how peacemaking practices are increasingly designed within conceptual (techno-political and moral) frameworks of *crisis*.

In this endeavour, I borrow insights from recent explorations of the concept of *crisis* by historians, who have demonstrated its productive and distinctive uses in medical, religious, philosophical, legal and political contexts since antiquity (Koselleck 1987; 2002; Koselleck and Richter 2006; Edwards 2006; Starn 1971). But also, conceptual tools developed by a promising, and still nascent, strand of social scientific research that endeavoured to understand emergent 'modern social imaginaries' (Taylor 2002; 2004) through similar filters, such as the notion of emergency (Calhoun 2004) are very relevant to the present work. Anthropologist Peter Redfield provided a detailed ethnographic account of how contemporary humanitarian workers and doctors adopt modes of engagement that function 'on the verge of crisis' (Redfield 2010). In this dissertation, I build extensively on these insights to argue that crucial discursive and institutionalized associations that tend to designate countries like Lebanon simultaneously as locations of perpetual crisis, and places for potential peacemaking, have significant consequences in a number of ways.

Some of these consequences refer to the ways in which these associations fundamentally shift both the horizon of temporality and the perception of urgency that are attached to widespread

problematizations of violence initiated by experts, and reproduced by global media. Within these kinds of problematizations, eruptions of violence tend to appear abrupt, disconnected from wider historical and geographical contexts, and are rendered almost inexplicable, like natural catastrophes, such as tsunamis and earthquakes (cf. Calhoun 2004). As a consequence of this fundamental change, previous types of engagement are transformed and new frames of intervention are generated. Arguably, peacemaking interventions are increasingly organized within bellicose frameworks as critical battles, if not *wars*, against diverse and omnipresent threats, such as 'non-state actors' and the 'spillover effects' of 'failed states.' In general, the increasing proliferation of the global politics of peace expertise within the framework of crisis has intensified the search for systems that can provide meaningful steps to preventing perceived eruptions, or in mitigating harmful effects, of possible conflicts, failures or attacks.

Yet, although I seek to draw attention to the phenomenon of an increasing association of contemporary practices of peacemaking with imaginaries of crisis, I do not conceive of the former within the framework of *response* to the latter. Arguably, the association of peacemaking with notions of crisis tends to rearticulate and redefine practices of peacemaking as responses to impeding or actual crises. Thus, expertise on peace and crisis is delineated as *responsive action* to acute situations of 'state failure,' sudden eruptions of 'ethnic conflict,' uncontrolled development of 'non-state actors'. Thus, either in pre-emptive form or as after-the-fact intervention, this form of expertise is thought of as responding to crisis. Instead of sticking to this much-propagated framework, I seek to analyze peacemaking practices from the point of view of their uses as *political techniques* within particular configurations of power.

It would perhaps suffice to say here that my main concern is with those taken-for-granted discursive frameworks, such as that of the *response*, that tend to reproduce the perception that peace experts are external actors to the dynamic phenomenon of the proliferation of socio-political violence at a global scale. As a result, another major distinction is put in place, that is between the domain of *war-making* – with its distinct tools, practices, actors, moralities and

rationalities – and the domain of *peacemaking* – with its own arsenal of moral principles, technical methods, actors and practices, etc. Needless to say, this distinction has a series of epistemological, moral and political implications. At the political level, the effects of keeping these two domains resolutely separate – in antithetical conceptual and moralized forms, often resembling the antithesis between *disease* and *remedy* – include not only the elimination of effective and reflective critiques of contemporary peacemaking, but also the impediment of better understandings of contemporary violence, war and war-making; especially because, as I hope to show in this dissertation, the global politics of (peace) expertise is formatting much of the contemporary perceptions about war, conflict and violence today.

In our troubled times, it is politically and analytically crucial to destabilize the fixed boundary between peacemaking and war-making and, instead, focus on more complex and dynamic, indeed hybrid, forms of violence around us. This is what Talal Asad urges us to do, for instance, when he asks what kind of politics is made possible today by the joint appearance of the "just war/evil terrorism" binary. Instead of adhering to the binary, Asad suggests that we translate the idea of 'just peace' not as a conclusion to a 'just war', but as "entitled peace sustained by nomadic violence, that is, violence in unpredictable forms and places, and informed by complex motives, whose effect is to sustain or undermine a given way of life" (2010a, 19). Michel Foucault makes this argument in an even more fundamental way when he proposes to invert Clausewitz's proposition and say, "politics is the continuation of war by other means" (2003, 17). If power is not merely, or not essentially, repression, says Foucault, it is then a particular configuration of *relations of force* in a given moment. This thought would then imply a number of things. First, the peaceful relations in any given society are essentially the product of a past war. Second, the end of the nominal war does not mean, however, that the reign of peace is free from those forms of political power, namely a 'silent war', that are used to maintain the certain relationship of force, and to re-inscribe it "in institutions, economic inequalities, language, and even the bodies of individuals" (Ibid.). Even within the domain of 'civil peace', the struggles over, or with, power

are perpetuated, in brief: the war continues. Thus, "we are always writing the history of the same war, even when we are writing the history of peace and its institutions." (ibid.).

As already stated above, I seek to contest the conceptual ground upon which fixed epistemological boundaries are established. Instead of respecting divides and binaries, I study rather how these, and other divides, upon which our current understandings of world affairs have come to be taken for granted. To be sure, moral and normative perceptions govern much of today's interventions, yet it is often that these perceptions are premised on scientific claims that are largely left uncontested. Yet, diverse forms of crises have knocked down the door of our previously respected institutionalized towers of wisdom, prompting us to enter unchartered territories and pose different sets of questions, and yes, towards different audiences: "One asks about the ways of knowing because one has already run up against a crisis within the epistemological field in which one lives" (Butler 2002, 5). Thus, instead of taking the 'crisis' for granted, one needs to explore the effects of its uses as an analytical, epistemological and political category. Such is the exploration that I seek to undertake here, asking, for example, how it enables or disables distinctive forms of power; how it produces new links between forms of knowledge and kinds of coercion; how it forms new subjects? And last, but not least, is it possible to live and think of peace without crisis; is it possible to analytically escape *crisis* and how?

An Ethnography of Critique

Historians trace the emergence of 'crisis' in democratic, ancient Athens, where the term was mostly used in questions of jurisprudence (Koselleck 1987; Brown 2009). In this juridical context, crisis was perceived as the product of the act of *krino,* which meant both accusing and passing a verdict. Hence, crisis was understood as the ability "to differentiate, to ask probing questions, and to judge" (Asad 2009, 48). Ever since, the term has acquired different uses and meanings in a multitude of contexts. For example, in the political sphere, it delineates a decision

that has to be taken on an essential issue, and which cannot be postponed. In the medical domain, it marks a crucial judgment about the course of illness; often, a decision over life or death. In the theological discourse, it characterizes the time of salvation in the sense of the 'final judgment' and in the historical perspective the end of an epoch, as, for example, in Lenin's understanding of crisis.

In this dissertation, I do not use the term as an analytical framework. I do not attempt to incorporate it into my own conceptual apparatus. On the contrary, I argue that any use of the term is both analytically flawed and politically suspect and, therefore, must be forsaken. This does not mean to say, however, that I am not interested in the ethical and the political aspects of the use of the term in contemporary expert discourses in Lebanon and elsewhere. In fact, the dissertation constantly asks the following questions: How is it defined, who is in crisis? How is it decided who is able to speak of crisis? How is it chosen who can resolve the crisis? As I argued above, this dissertation can be also understood as an attempt to highlight the highly problematic and disconcerting consequences that different kinds of associations of the term may produce in a practical and political sense. Abandoning the concept of *crisis*, I suggest the full endorsement of two other terms, which may share a close etymological affinity to the former notion, but seem to possess a much higher degree of analytical and ethical value; these two terms are the adjective form *critical* and the substantive form *critique*.

The use of the term *critical* in the adjective form minimizes the totalitarian (sic!) and normative effects of the term crisis without, however, losing the ability to refer to situations of rupture, in which judgment is needed. However, as I argued further above, the term should not lead us to construct yet another distinction between those who are part and parcel of a field and those who maintain the right, the privilege, the ability to offer critical views on the former from the position of externality. In fact, my use of the term *critical* argues for a holistic, but hopefully not totalitarian, understanding of that kind of mental and ethical work of the subjects on themselves, particularly in moments of controversy, rupture and reflection.

It is with this definition in mind that I approach the controversy over peacemaking in Lebanon as a significant entry point for a type of research that may provide theoretical and methodological insights to a number of debates and issues. A further argument I make is that the current situation, in which the conceptual link between peace and crisis has driven both governmental and non-governmental entities to adjust their priorities according to this new understanding of peace-making, provides outstanding research opportunities. This current situation in which the transformation of the professional field of peace-making is increasingly becoming open to negotiation, struggle and controversy is an especially fruitful moment for social scientific inquiries. Such situations of rupture, reorientation and reflection constitute 'critical moments' in the methodological sense (Boltanski and Thévenot 1999). In Chapter Three, I rely heavily on such a moment, i.e. the violent 'May Events', as a convenient empirical entry point into the research field in question, hoping that such snapshots provide particularly rich insights into the institutional processes and the expert practices *in the making*.

At another level, and as I argued further above, the dissertation builds on an emerging and promising strand of social scientific reflexivity, widely known as the *sociology of critique*. From this point of view, the researcher fully acknowledges, both analytically and methodologically, the 'critical capacity' of the actors (Boltanski 2009; Boltanski, Thévenot, and Porter 1991; Boltanski and Thévenot 1999). This approach sheds additional light on the multiplicity of efforts by peace experts themselves to critically examine the moral and political parameters of the politics of peace expertise. This underlying approach seeks to actively prevent the downgrading of the actors to the level of 'research subjects', and of the 'informants'. As I show in different parts of the dissertation, far from being oblivious to struggles, controversies and failures, merely waiting for the social scientist to point them out, peace experts remain quite alert and very aware of the constant need to critically assess and often fundamentally question developments and structures within the broader politics of peace expertise. They constantly engage in self-critical discussions with colleagues, or with actors from other fields of expertise, struggle to re-adjust careers and

projects, and last, but not least, skillfully engage in passionate arguments and reflexive discussions with anthropologists, who claim to want to *study* them. In this sense, this present work is an attempt at an *ethnography of critique*.

Methods Applied and Research Sites

Research on this dissertation officially begun in the summer of 2007, when I received funding from the *University Research Program Asia-Europe* at the University of Zurich. Since then I have spent 18 months (summer 2007, winter to fall 2008 and spring 2009) conducting fieldwork in Beirut, Lebanon. There, I also did extensive archival research in several institutions, such as the *Institute of Palestine Studies*, the library of the *American University of Beirut* and the *Lebanese Center for Policy Studies*. I also spent four valuable months in Geneva (Fall 2007), where I conducted archival research in the *United Nations* library, and held interviews with high-ranking peace-making officials of the organization.

In the course of my fieldwork in Geneva and Beirut, I conducted participant observation in numerous conflict resolution workshops, U.N. conferences and think tank events, and I interviewed dozens of peace experts, such as diplomats, NGO workers, mediators, and think tank researchers, as well as many others, such as foreign correspondents, politicians, ex-UN mediators, members of the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs, academics and peace activists. Additionally, I conducted selected interviews with experts and academics in Cairo, Berlin, Zurich, Paris, Ramallah, Budapest, Istanbul and New York City. This multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995) helped to generate rich primary empirical material, and collect secondary material. Moreover, it gave me an excellent sense of the historical and geographical complexities of the global politics of peace expertise on a global scale.

Moreover, in Lebanon I became involved in discussions and actions on peace-making, reconciliation, war memory and activism. Additionally, during my fieldwork in Lebanon, I had

the chance to work for an international peace-making NGO for a brief, but intensive period, and was assigned the task of conducting a baseline study on peacemaking and dialogue. The study served as the preparatory phase for the NGO's prospective plans to expand its activities in the country. This opportunity strengthened my grasp of this complex, and sometimes inaccessible, field.

During the course of my research a mix of methods was applied (discourse analysis, semi-structured interviews, archival research, participant observation). Their application differed according to particular research objectives, peace expert types and the main expert practices under study (see table 0.1).

Expert type	**Main Expert Practice**	**Research sites/sources**	**Methods applied**
Professional Mediators	Dialogue between rulers in *peace summits*	Epistemology and features of the summit	Interviews with politicians, mediators and diplomats; archival research
Peace and Conflict Resolution NGOs	Training of citizens in *workshops of conflict resolution*	Workshops, training manuals for experts, NGO documents	Interviews with NGO members and peace activists; archival research; participant observation at workshops
Peace and Crisis Think Tanks	Production of *reports on crisis and non-state actors*	Think tank conferences, published crisis reports	Interviews with scholars; archival research; participant observation at open and semi-open events
Diverse Agencies of United Nations	*Dogma* production, peacemaking projects	UN resolutions and research documents, peacemaking projects	Discourse and content analysis of UN documents; interviews with ex- and current UN staff members

Table 0.1 Methods Apllied and Research Sites

Chapter One Lebanonizing Lebanon

Problematizations of Violence in Academic Literature (1970-2008)

Whatever associations of place and culture may exist
must be taken as problems for anthropological research
rather than the given ground that one takes as a point of departure.
Akhil Gupta/ James Ferguson

Introduction

'So you have a project?

- My film is about Beirut...

Beirut? Great idea! Christians and Muslims going to church together on Sunday. To the church and the mosque! Carry on, I am listening!

- It is a comedy actually!

Beirut, a comedy? Are you joking? Beirut is tragedy! Beirut is war, murder, rape, blood, bombs, Syrians, Iranians, Americans, Hizbollah, Israel, the Palestinians, Arafat, massacres, everyone kills everyone, families, parents, children... Beirut is Um Khalthum.. there is nothing more tragic than an Um Khulthum song!

- But Um Khulthum is Egyptian!

- Oh Lebanon, I love this country... There´s a little Lebanese restaurant everywhere I go... Tabbouleh, hommos... Oh! I love hommos. Your mother cooks? ... I imagine the Lebanese mother... Under her veil, with all her daughters... Your father has several wives? You shouldn't

forget to put a hommos scene in your movie... Do you have a religion in your country relating to hommos? Like, the hommosites? So, do you have a project?'

The dialogue above stems from a short film called *Ecce Hommos* and made by Lebanese director Claude el Khal.[17] The film consists of one and only scene, in which a young Lebanese filmmaker attempts to persuade a presumably established 'international' film producer about his project to make a "comedy about Beirut." Upon hearing the word, the producer encounters the young film maker with a handful of stereotypical images that revolve around exaggerated conceptualizations of religion, kinship, cooking, dressing, singing, and last, but not least, killing and dying. In the producer's caricature image of Lebanon, what begins with a Sunday stroll to the church or the mosque by "Muslims and Christians together" in a Beiruti neighbourhood is, in the next passage, interrupted by a bloody war that involves powerful nations and global conspiracies. Finally, the redemption from violence is sought in a Lebanese restaurant, situated "everywhere" the producer goes in the world. Thus, the dish of "hommos" emerges as the epitome of what the producer understands as Lebanese *culture*, but this too becomes – in the eyes of the 'international' – the basis for yet another sectarian affiliation, i.e. the *hommosites*.

This short film stands as an unmistakable *cri de effroi* by a representative of a creative, but frustrated generation of Lebanese film makers, artists, and intellectuals, who, feeling more and more alienated by the ways that the country is depicted in international fori of politics, media, and academia, protest against easy essentializations and seek instead to re-articulate Lebanon's history and presence through both less gloomy and less glorified frameworks. Whether a film about Beirut should be a comedy or a drama is obviously of little importance here. Crucial is to

[17] *Ecce Hommos* (El Khal 2009) Participation at the Cannes Film Festival 2010, Short Film Corner. Film description by the director: "Full of enthusiasm and hope, a young Lebanese filmmaker, script in hand, knocks on the door of an "international" producer to pitch his film project." The ironic pun that underlies the title's similarity to Friedrich Nietzsche's classic treaty *Ecce Homo* is, most probably, quite conscious a choice (Nietzsche 1992). Due to length constraints, the reproduction of the dialogue is slightly adjusted here.

explore what makes possible the dissemination of essentialist and simplifying depictions of Lebanon's tragic encounter with the violence of the Civil War. In *Ecce Hommos,* the promising, but yet unrecognised young film maker confronts the authority of a respected expert in the field, who seeks to punctuate the film's idea with an entire arsenal of images and discursive categories, such as the 'little Lebanese restaurant,' the 'Lebanese mother,' the 'tragedy of Beirut,' the 'father with many wifes' and, finally, the world-known Egyptian singer *Umm Khalthum*, whom the expert mistakes as Lebanese! In fact, the indifference and lightness with which the producer reacts to such a grave guff is indicative of a certain type of authority that poses and imposes itself on the particular context without having to care much about those 'details'.

In this chapter, I look at the ways that violence in Lebanon was treated in academic accounts since the 1970's. Overall, I seek to show how caricature images such as the ones described in *Ecce Hommos* had their more elaborate counterparts in the social scientific production and how social scientists often tended to draw images of Lebanon, which were rather products of priorities and frameworks of metropolitan academic centers situated thousand miles away, without often having to care about the 'details'.

Problematizations of Violence and Metropolitan Concepts

In this first chapter, I undertake the task of a historical contextualization of the ways through which the *problem* with violence in Lebanon has been articulated, described, and conceptualized in selected academic literature. I choose to begin with this inquiry, because social sciences (especially the academic subfields of Political Science and International Relations) arguably maintain still the power to establish particular 'regimes of truth' (Foucault 1980) through institutionalized processes of invention, circulation and application of hegemonic categories and concepts vis-à-vis different kinds of *problems* in modern political societies. In this, I follow Foucault's perception of modern disciplines as authoritative ways through which scientific

discourse creates new spaces of thought, while simultaneously designates clear boundaries around these spaces (Foucault 1994; 1980).

An historically informed exploration of academic sources that deal with the problem of violence and conflict before, during and after the Civil War in Lebanon (1975-1990) might reveal significant insights about the shifting categories through which Lebanon was perceived throughout this period. Such an approach, if enriched with the broadening of the analysis to include developments in the metropolitan academic centers of global outreach, might also highlight how applications of scientific concepts on a certain geo-historical locality are premised on constant borrowings, imports and syntheses between different localities and the metropoly. Yet, instead of running the risk of essentializing the categories of *local* and *global*, it is advisable to turn to more productive ways to seek answers for complex questions.

Therefore, I suggest to utilize Foucault's concept of *problematization* as an analytics of exploring and marking crucial shifts in processes of thought (Foucault 1984; 1997; see also Rabinow 2002a; 2003; Collier and Ong 2005). According to Foucault, problematizations usually follow historical moments of loss of familiarity. In these moments, what is previously perceived as known and familiar suddenly enters the domain of incomprehensibility. Something must "have happened to have made it uncertain, to have it lose its familiarity, or to have provoked a certain number of difficulties around it" (Foucault 1997; Rabinow 2002:117). It is pivotal here to acknowledge the analytical profoundness of the concept in its ability to steer attention towards *critical moments* of (intellectual) astonishment, confusion, consternation and, of course, controversy. The experienced failure to intellectually grasp what has been previously so familiar is the foundational principle of any problematization. This is why, though, problematizations are equally easy and difficult to identify. They appear to be easily defined, because they mark a distinct break with the familiar ways of theorizing in the past and thus stand out as novelties. However, they can also be immensely difficult to tackle because they tend to pose the problem under question not only in terms of *old* versus *new*, but mainly as *true* versus *false*. Says Foucault: "A problematization does not mean the representation of a pre-existent object, nor the creation through discourse of an

object that did not exist. It is the ensemble of discursive and non-discursive practices that make something enter into the play of true and false and constitute it as an object of thought – whether in the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis etc." (Foucault 1984, 640; Rabinow 2002a).

Problematizations thus enter the domain of the disciplines as primary sources of inspiration, mobilization, but also legitimization: "This development of a given into a question, this transformation of a group of obstacles and difficulties into problems to which the *diverse solutions will attempt to produce a response*, this is what constitutes the point of problematization and the specific work of thought" (Foucault 1984, 640; emphasis added). In other words, the legitimacy that comes with the task of producing a response allows for the problematizations to enter the domain of the academic disciplines. Again, this is also what enables their misrecognition. This vital link between problematizations and solutions often disarms the possibilities and potentialities of critique. Elevating a question to the status of an object of thought, i.e. as a moral reflection, scientific knowledge, poltical analysis, almost always entails the task of providing solutions. The normative focus on solutions often obscures the processes through which processes of problematization were conducted at the first place. Still, Foucault argues that the moment in which problematizations are conceived of as potential solutions is the most productive entry point for the analyst, because this moment provides the task for the latter "to rediscover at the root of these diverse solutions the general form of problematization that has made them possible – even in their very opposition... what has made possible the transformations of the difficulties and obstacles into a general problem for which one proposes diverse practical solutions" (ibid.: p.118).

In this chapter, I apply these insights to approach the question of socio-political violence in Lebanon as this kind of *general problem* that was articulated from the perspective of the practical solutions and responses, such as the diverse practices of peacemaking in the post-War period. In particular, I seek to discover the *root* of these solutions in a particular *general form*, through which the Civil War violence was problematized by authoritative academic discourses. With the

benefit of historical hindsight, I differentiate between three historical phases, but I focus on the last phase, which I regard as central for the emergence of the general form of 'ethnic conflict'.

First, I am concerned with the years before the war. In terms of academic analysis, I suggest to label this phase 'Village Anthropology: Missing the War'. In my exploration of the period, I focus only on two characteristic anthropological works that proved unwilling or unable to place Lebanon within the wider geo-political context of conflict and structural violence. Instead, they followed political priorities dictated by and analytical concepts produced in the metropoly.

Second, after the outbreak of hostilities in 1975, Lebanon turned into a profoundly *unfamiliar* place for many academic experts. The initial dumbfoundment marked a clear break with the ways through which Lebanon's political reality was perceived in the past, as well as the beginning of somewhat equivocal efforts to make sense of the new situation. I regard the early debates of Civil War violence as the product of a typical case of intellectual consternation and loss of familiarity. In that sense, the outbreak of the Civil War constitutes a crucial moment of problematization. The new situation needed new tools, since it turned a given into a question. As a result, diverse authors and authorities put different explanations and analyses forward. Some took notice of the broader context of the Cold War and talked about 'proxy wars', while others made reference to the specificities of the Lebanese political landscape, such as the economic and social inequality, or differences in the ideologies of mountain inhabitants and city dwellers. Few others proposed a more synthetic view between 'internal' and 'external' factors. Overall, these approaches constituted competing lines of argumentation within a relatively open and contested space of debate among intellectuals and academics. Hence, the title of the relevant section is 'The war of the books.'

After the end of the Lebanese Civil War, the emergence of a distinct domain of scientifically sanctioned and systematically organized body of knowledge radically changed the modes and the terms of the debate. It was yet again time for other ways to problematize violence, and, indeed, in retrospect. I argue that the rise of the category of 'ethnic conflict' in the Western, and especially

in the US academic disciplines of Political Science and International Relations, provided the necessary conceptual background against which Lebanon could become familiar again. The category served as the undisputed framework for particular problematizations of violence, thereby emerging as an ensemble of discursive and non-discursive practices that simultaneously constituted a dominant pattern of political analysis and a clearly defined object of scientific engagement. It also implied, if not explicitly organized, several responses to the problem of violence in the country in the form of particular practices of peacemaking.

In this chapter, I argue that the advent of the notion of 'ethnic conflict' produced certain effects. To begin with, it enabled convenient, albeit seriously unreflected, readings of past violence through the crucial linking of the latter to ethnicity and culture in more general terms. In doing this, it also sponsored the placement of Lebanon within a particular trans-historical and trans-geographical framework, the features of which were effectively encapsulated in the word 'Lebanonization'. As I argue further below, *Lebanonization* emerged thousand miles away from Lebanon as a handy and popularized signifier for the globalized phenomenon of ethnic conflict. Further, the depiction of Lebanon as a typical case of Lebanonization constituted the country as unique and generic at the same time. Thus, while historical accounts of ethnic violence and sectarian antagonisms were presenting a rather unique story in its own context, contemporary Lebanon – as the final product of these developments – was nevertheless regarded a generic and comparable case of 'ethnic conflict'. In other words, violence was understood in its manifestation as the contingent outcome of the diachronic competition between distinct sectarian groups. However, in its substance, this kind of violence was regarded not unique at all, since it could be observed in different parts of the planet. Hence, in the heart of the novel problematization of violence in crucial relation to ethnicity, there is a double move: ethnic violence as social phenomenon is *rooted* within a particular cultural context, but as an object of study it is *universalized*.

Yet, the new category of ethnic conflict did not offered only a conceptual template for diverse forms of essentialization, ethnicization and culturalization of violence. Arguably, the theorization

of violence in relation to different versions of *ethnicity* favored the centrality of the theme of *identity*.[18] In this sense, it is perhaps important to remind here what Nikolas Rose (1996) and others (Finlay 2010) argued about the role of identity discourses not only in cases of ethnic conflict, but also within what Rose called 'the genealogy of subjectivication' (Rose 1996). Thus, within modern forms of subjectivation, identity as a marker becomes primarily a mode of self-government: "Cultural identity is the current regime through which government works" (Rose ibid.). Regarding identity as a 'politics of life itself' (Rose 2001) means to re-interpret the discourses and the practices that endow individuals, communities and groups with strategies of identity politics as less liberal and liberating that they might have been initially understood. On the flip side of this, it can be argued that the rise of the paradigm of the 'ethnic conflict' produced very immobile conceptualizations of the individuals, communities, and groups at hand. These were now increasingly regarded as *rooted* in their ethnic, sectarian, cultural loyalties and predispositions (cf. Friedman 2002). By extension, members of 'ethnic groups' were perceived as *cultural dopes* and prisoners of primordial instincts. Culturalist fixations, essentialist rootings, extremely immobile and inflexible perceptions of individuals, groups and communities were sine qua non by-products of the rise of the category of ethnic conflict.

Finally, the rise of the ethnic conflict entails diverse processes of *placemaking* (Gupta and Ferguson 1997). Gupta and Ferguson build on a burgeoning literature of critical human geographers and anthropologists, who deny the givenness and naturalness of any locality and urge us instead to focus on the "social and political processes of place making, conceived less as a matter of 'ideas' than of embodied practices that shape identities and enable resistances" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997, 7). They caution against approaches that take 'cultural territorializations' for granted. Instead, they propose to consider the latter as "complex and contingent results of ongoing historical and political processes" that invite anthropological study (ibid.4). The rise of

[18] For a thorough discussion on the question of the increasing visibility of questions of identity after the end of the Cold war see the contributions in the edited volume by Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (Hall and du Gay 1996). In lack of any better, Hall defends the use of the term 'identity'. He regards identities as the constituted notions within representations which oblige us to read "not the so-called return to roots but a coming-to-terms-with our 'routes'" (ibid., 4).

the concept of 'ethnic conflict' produced new geographies of order and disorder, which – inherently entangled with new regimes of intervention – generated new understandings of *placemaking qua peacemaking*. In the next chapters, I will present a handful of embodied and discursive practices of peacemaking, which were thus proposed as responses to particular understanding of placemaking through, for example, the hegemonic filter of ethnic conflict. In this sense, *peacemaking* can be defined as the ensemble of those practical and theoretical responses crafted within the new discursive space that emerged as the synthesis of particular conceptions of place, culture and violence under a single frame of problematization.

But what kind of place is this? Arjun Appadurai notes that "what anthropologists find, in this or that place, far from being independent data for the construction and verification of theory, is in fact a very compound of local realities and the contingencies of metropolitan theory" (1986a, 360).[19] He laments what he regards as anthropology's tendencies to develop 'theoretical metonyms' and 'gatekeeping concepts.' These are problematic because they "seem to limit anthropological theorizing about the place in question, and (...) define the quintessential and dominant questions of interest in the region" (ibid. 357). These concepts become the sole filters, through which the society under study is regarded, and thus obscure and overshadow other aspects, which may be equally important in our efforts to understand the complexity. He refers extensively to the example of how theorizing about 'caste' has, to a great extent, become the 'surrogate' for Indian society. In this present case, the discursive combination of 'Lebanon' and 'ethnic conflict' makes up a primary example of what Appadurai calls 'prestige zones of anthropological theorizing.' (ibid.357). In line with these insights, I attempt throughout this chapter to shed particular attention to those understandings of *Lebanon* that are – to a certain extent at least – "compounds of local realities and metropolitan theories.

[19] Talal Asad and Paul Rabinow make similar arguments (Asad 1986; Rabinow 1986). Both claimed that the way that politics is perceived in other societies is crucially linked to political relations of the societies from which the researchers come. Thus, Asad advocates for a contextual, historical analysis of the political interests of the observers' societies at particular historical moments, while Rabinow refers to the importance of academic politics in production of research agendas.

This chapter is organized in the following way. First, I undertake an effort to provide an account of the development and the controversy over the concept of 'ethnic conflict' in selected academic literature. Here, I show how a book published by a U.S. law scholar in 1985 was advanced to the status of a pathbreaking, systematic and panoramic analysis of diverse instances of political violence under one single principle. The second section is the most substantial part of the chapter. Here, I present and review academic works on Lebanon that were published before, during and after the end of the Civil War. Such a review reveals interesting insights about the ways that particular frameworks were preferred over others during a period of almost 40 years. I also attempt to suggest why was that in some cases. In the end of my selective review, I argue that the concept of 'ethnic conflict' – in its various manifestations and versions – became the dominant frame in academic problematizations over violence in Lebanon. Finally, on the face of these findings, I ask and undertake an effort to reply to the pertinent question that remains: Who needs *ethnic conflict*? Which are the productive uses of the concept? How does a concept that fails to do justice to the complex historical reality find widespread application in academic circles and why? In brief, I seek to discover what are the productive uses of the concept of ethnic conflict. I suggest that some of these uses might be regarded within the context of reproduction of three distinct categories of subjects: Lebanese political elites, metropolitan academic circles who seek cooperation with their political elites, and experts in peacemaking.

'Ethnic Groups in Conflict': The Birth of a Metropolitan Paradigm

In 1985, Donald Horowitz published a book that was meant to become extremely infuential in the years to come (Horowitz 1985).[20] The book's main argument is that the phenomenon of 'ethnic conflict' is universal. Thus, "ethnic conflict is a world-wide phenomenon" (Horowitz 1985:xi.), whose importance could "no longer be denied" (ibid.). The book is presented as an effort to

[20] The *Web of Science* gives more than 1000 citations of the book in a plethora of books, articles and reports. See also Brass (1985) for a similar but much less popular perspective.

understand this global phenomenon, which is further described "as a force shaping human affairs,... as a threat to be controlled" (ibid.:x). The author inserts that 'ethnic violence' has claimed more than "ten millions lives" since the end of World War II, and that in the last two decades the phenomenon has spread widely. At the core of the emergence of ethnic violence is the fact that 'ethnicity' takes over the center of politics in one country after the other, posing a direct challenge to the "cohesion of states" and a source of "international tension": "Connections among Biafra, Bangladesh, and Burundi, Beirut, Brussels and Belfast were at first hesitantly made – 60arie one 'tribal,' one 'linguistic,' another 'religious'? – but that is true no longer" (ibid.)

There is a direct connection between all these cities of conflict, says Horowitz; ethnicity is a unifiying element, that spurs violence, which we have been wrongly calling with different names so far: *tribal, religious, lingustic* etc. It is time to recognize that there is a single, global occurrence, and a single underlying force that permeates these conflicts: "Ethnicity has fought and bled and burned its way into public and scholarly consciousness." (ibid.). The book thus suggests that it is high time for a systematization of the diverse instances of violence under this single underlying principle. It sets out a "comprehensive set of generalizations that fits the material and into which new material can be fitted." (ibid.). The problem is not the lack of knowledge, 'evidence' or 'data', Horowitz argues. In fact, there is enough of that so that theorizing can be further advanced. What is missing though is "enough understanding, enough categories". This was the declated aim of the book, namely the provision of "principles by which to 60aries60t cases, depictions of the structure and texture of group relations, an understanding of patterns of conflict" (ibid.).

The book was thus suggesting a new geographical imagination, which could make the inter-cultural study of conflict possible. The suggestion was premised on a discursive innovation, namely the lumping together of different cases of 'ethnic conflict' in one systematic overview. Although, Horowitz was not the first to suggest this, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* is pathbreaking because it was the first efforts for a systematic conceptualization of the association between ethnicity and violence. However, not all elements of this mode of conceptualization were

completely new. Modernization theory of the 1960s, for example, often discussed the coherence of states with diverse populations in their territories. According to it, political violence should be understood as the result of efforts by ethnic minorities to break free from the iron cage of an ethnically heterogeneous state.[21] Horowitz makes use of the notion of 'suppressed ethnicities' (i.e. minorities or 61aries61tric61 movements) within states. These struggles inform the concept of 'ethnic conflict.' Yet, the book did not share the old optimism of the modernization theorists. Now, writes Horrowitz, "it has become clear that few states are homogeneous and many are deeply divided (ibid.)."

Arguably, the old modernization theory was now refashioned into a new paradigm. However, the globalization of the phenomenon of 'ethnic conflict' was made possible through the conceptual innovation to gloss over essential differences between radically different and uncomparable historico-political contexts. This innovation enabled the reading of a wide spectrum of occurrences of political violence across the globe as empirical 'evidence' for ethnic hostility, As a result, diverse phenomena of violence around the globe, such as "recurrent hostilities in Northern Ireland, Chad, and Lebanon; secessionist warfare in Burma, Bangladesh, Sudan, Nigeria, Iraq, and the Philippines; the Somali invasion of Ethiopia and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus; the army killings in Uganda and Syria and the mass civilian killings in India-Pakistan… Sikh terrorism, Basque terrorism, Corsican terrorism, Palestinian terrorism… the explulsion of Chinese from Vietnam… ethnic riots in India, Sri Lanka" (ibid.) were remodelled as different versions of the same thing, namely, the unfied category of 'ethnic conflict.' The new paradigm's powerful appeal would lie, arguably, at its ability to simplify and decontextualize. Thus, straightforward instances of state violence (e.g. invasions by neighbouring state armies, killings of civilians by state

[21] Two edited volumes stand out as characteristic of the two periods: Clifford Geertz's 'Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa' (Geertz 1965) and Richard Betts' 'Conflict after the Cold War' (Betts 1994)'. The former constituted the product of the cooperation of an anthropologist with several other political scientists within US academic politics of areas studies (cf. Mitchell 2003). Geertz refers extensively to Lebanon in that book, for which he foresees an optimistic future. The latter is a collection of essays, which largely subscribe to the culturization thesis (s.below).

armies), national liberation movements (Basque, Corsica, Palestine, Ireland), and complex configurations of post-colonial struggles (Iraq, Burma, India-Pakistan etc.) would be reduced to the level of thenic conflict. The new mode of classification was not anymore based on social complexities and complex histories, but rather on different combinations of the same thing, that is the incompatibility between diverse cultures to co-exist. Arguably, the theoretical innovation that begun in the mid 1980's opened the way for the paradigm's exponential growth in the decades to come. The surge in the literature also brought about the crystallization of different approaches, such as the primordialists (e.g. Kaplan 1993), the instrumentalists (e.g. Brass 1996), and the *constructivists* (e.g. Brubaker 1995). The latter approach directly challenged the assumed universality of the general paradigm. Yet, it did so only to a certain extent.

In 1998, an important review of the literature on 'ethnic and nationalist violence' (Brubaker and Laitin 1998) questioned the empirical foundations of the alleged omnipresense of the phenomenon of 'ethnic conflict'. The authors lament that most of the literature tends to mischaracterize „vast regions (such as post-communist Eastern Europe and Eurasia in ist entirety or all of sub-Saharan Africa) as a seething cauldron on the verge of boiling over or as a tinderbox, which a single careless spark could ignite into an inferno of ethnonational violence" (ibid.: 424). Although they acknowledge that Horowitz's remains a „classic text", they argue that undifferentiated perspectives make it difficult to distinguish those phenomena that can be truly regarded as cases of ethnic violence. As an result, a fake image of omnipresence is reproduced. Yet, the authors do not claim that the notion must be dismissed. Instead, it must be disaggregated (ibid. 446), because today "too much social scientific work in this domain (as in others) involves highly aggregated explananda, as if ethnic violence were a homogeneous substance varying only in magnitude" (ibid.). This research strategy should seek to identify and explain the "heterogeneous processes and mechanisms involved in generating the varied instances of what we all too casually lump together – given our prevailing ethnicizing interpretive frames – as 'ethnic violence.'" (ibid. 447). This critique was followed by more scholars who pursued to destabilize or even to dismiss the concept. For example, a polemical piece by Gilley (2004) regards the study of

ethnic conflict to be „a major growth industry“ and thus calls 63aries63 limitation of the field of ethnic conflict studies, if not for „abandoning it altogether“ (Gilley 2004: 1156).[22]

To be sure, anthropologists had special reasons to address both the universalist claims and the essentialist features inherent in the use of the label. For example, Jack David Eller (1999) argued against the idea that the conflicts of the post-Cold War era belong to the past due to their 'ethnic character'. Instead, they must be regarded as a defining phenomenon of the New World Order (ibid.), namely "modern-day inventions based only loosely on 'traditional' cultures and hostilities" (ibid.). Eller explores five case studies (Sri Lanka, the Kurds, Rwanda and Burundi, Bosnia and Quebec) and shows that misplaced uses of ethnicity miss its constructed nature. Ultimately, "these groups are fighting not *about* culture, but *with* culture." (ibid.). In other words, "ethnic mobilization is a type of cultural work" (cf. Burnham 1996).

Anthropologist Paul Richards has been one of the most ardent critics of the uses (and abuses) of the notions of culture and ethnicity in academic theorizations and problematizations of war and violence (Richards 2004a; 2004b; 2008). In the introduction of his edited volume 'No Peace, No War', Richards attacks what he regards as a-historical and anti-sociological premises upon which the theories of 'New Wars' have been established.[23] He then goes on further to associate the proliferation of those theories with what he sees as the 'non-interventionist stance', that is the reluctancy of the West to interfere in those 'new wars'. Especially the popularity of the 'new barbarism' argument, says Richards, led to the spread of a particular attitude among elites in West and the Global North that could be summarized as following: "We cannot interfere in these wars, because we cannot understand them and thus cannot take position for or against one of the

[22] For further criticisms of the concept of ethnic conflict from the perspective of political science, see: (Fox 2002; Crawford and Lipschutz 1998; King 2001; Mueller 2000).

[23] For the purposes of illustration, Richards differentiates between three main categorizations of this phenomenon. The first category focuses on issues of demography and population pressure as the main sources to violence (Richards calls this approach 'Malthus with guns'). Second, that old hatreds between different cultures have been resurrected after lifting the lid of the Cold War ('new barbarism'). Third, the assertion that most of the conflicts are due to cobinations of instances of "greed and grievance". Richards laments the instrumentalization of anthropological literature in these debates, especially in the second case. For the uses and abuses of culture in racist struggles, see also (Kuper 1999).

parties." Thus, the association of culture with violence resulted to wholesale depictions of diverse conflicts in the Global South as incomprehensible from a Western perspective and thus unclassifiable in moral terms according to which questions of intervention might have been discussed and decided. Richards argues that culturalist explanations of violence disabled the interventionist reflexes of the powerful nations of the West.

This present work bears witness to a radically different perspective to Richard's. As my discussion further below shows, the systematic effort to categorize the phenomenon of violence in Lebanon as a paradigmatic case of ethnic conflict already constitutes intervention, because it puts in place a powerful explanatory framework upon which reading of history and society, notions of belonging and place, as well as practices of peacemaking and development are designed and established. Further, it reproduces a number of conceptual distinctions and puts in place complex processes of subjectivation, whose effects on the society at hand cannot be easily assessed, especially because they are far-reaching. For example, the idea that ethnic conflicts entail irrational elements, or the argument that they stem from a pre-modern era, depicts the participants of those conflicts not only as ontologically Others, but essentially as ontological inferiors to the rational observers, who are usually situated in the West. As a result, the observes, who have decided to remain 'non-interventional', not only appear to have the moral high ground, because they do not get involved into the hostilities, but the rational distance too that allows them to categorize the conflicts as irrational, barbaric etc. Arguably, this situation enables the legitimization of a series of possible attitutes vis-à-vis current conflicts, which may range from immediate intervention to non-intervention. Thus, instead of disabling interventionism, I would argue that the paradigm of 'ethnic conflict' provides an immense spectrum of possible choices. In the following pages, I highlight the multiplicity of approaches and practices that the dissemination of this explanation invited in the case of post-war Lebanon.

Academic Problematizations of Violence in Lebanon (1970-2008)

The academic genealogies of Lebanon's violence that follow expand a period of over forty years. However, I do not have the ambition to offer an exhaustive review. Rather, I chose to examine in relative length those works that I regard as most characteristic in their ability to highlight tendencies, struggles and orientations within the academic trajectories, at home and abroad, that sought to come to terms with Lebanon's predicament with violence.

Village Anthropology: Missing the War?

Although socio-political tensions were running high in Lebanon long before the outbreak of the Civil War in April 1975, only few scholars escaped the overall celebratory tone of the mainstream political science literature that regarded the country as a successful model of 'consociationalism' comparable to countries such as Switzerland, Austria and Belgium (Steiner and Obler 1977; Steiner 1974; Lehmbruch 1974).[24] In fact, sensationalist and neo-orientalist accounts of this period labeled the Mediterranean country the 'Switzerland of the East' (*Swisra el sharqiye*). It was during this time that Mount Lebanon was established as a prime destination for estivation and tourism across the Middle East and beyond (Traboulsi 2007). Trabulsi notes both the historical origins as well as the political uses of the metapher. During the French mandate over Lebanon (1923-43), the idea of a Lebanese exceptionalism was put forward by a group of Maronite and franco-phile intellectuals, who called themselves the 'New Phoenicians' (ibid.). The resurrection of ancient Phoenicia as an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983) for moden Lebanon was to a great extent thought of as an effort to delineate a distinct identity clearly separated by the surrounding Arab populations. Trabulsi argues that the metapher to the Alpine country served as yet another layer of distinction vis-à-vis the Arab environment. The metapher, which was first

[24] Notable exceptions are works by Lebanese and Arab social scientists, such as (Suleiman 1972; Farsoun 1973; Harik 1972), who traced the political tensions to dramatic instances of structural inequality in the country. However, other Lebanese writers remained optimistic about Lebanon's "new society' (Nassar 1970).

used by the French travellers Lamartine and Gerard de Nerval to compare the landscape of Mount Lebanon to that of the Alpine country, was resurrected by the Lebanese nationalists as yet another layer of distinct identity vis-à-vis the mounting Arab nationalism within and outside of the country. Hence, a strong bank section, high mountains, religiously divided regions and a country that exploits its natural beauty in tourism and estivation seemed to have underscored the comparison to Switzerland (Trabulsi 2007: 92). Thus, (Western) political scientific accounts on pre-war Lebanon appear to be driven less by the historical realities on the ground than by dominant theories (consociationalism) created in the metropolitan centers of academic production. These theories often concurred with the exceptionalist and neo-orientalist imaginations of Lebanon's nationalist intelligentsia.

However, around that time something very similar happened also with the discipline of anthropology. In what follows, I present two ethnographic works by anthropologists who ventured in Lebanon before and during the war. The danger of oversimplification notwithstanding, I argue that these ethnographies highlight the limits of anthropological fieldwork if the latter is resolutely perceived through the lens of metropolitan academic paradigms.[25]

Let us begin with a PhD dissertation submitted in 1970 by *John Evans Rothenberger* (1971), titled 'Law and Conflict resolution, politics and change in a Sunni Muslim Village in Lebanon'. Following the tenets of fieldwork practice at his time, Rothenberger chose for his research a little village in the region of Akkar in Northern Lebanon. Arguably, the choice of the topic was also following a popular trend in the Anglosaxonic anthropology of the 1960s, which regarded the study of conflicts in village settings as a powerful indicator about the ways that *social order* was

[25] It is essential to note here the superb ethnography of violence and domination by Michael Gilsenan, which does not belong to the tendency I am discussing here (Gilsenan 1996). Yet, there is an interesting caveat in Gilsenan's ethnography. The book was published in 1996, almost a quarter of the century after the conclusion of the fieldwork by the author and few years after the end of the Civil War. The fieldwork though was conducted few years before its eruption (1971-2). Therefore, one is unable to say whether and to what extent metropolitan discourses played a role in the particular depiction of the Lebanese agrarian society as a harsh world dominated by ruthless men of power.

maintained in these small societies.[26] In the words of the author, the research on "conflicts and their resolution is an important window onto the society for the anthropologist who would understand a community" (ibid.:8). The ethnographic task was thus to map, analyze and theorize those conflicts, which would then allow valuable insights into the "village life".

But what are the limits of this social order that the anthropologist came to study? And what is the scale of the conflicts that must be explored? In the introduction, the ethnographer inserts that in order to understand conflict and conflict resolution, one has to study the "*total socio-cultural environment* of the community in which the conflicts arise and are resolved, or not resolved." (ibid.:9, emphasis added). Arguably, the designation 'total' here refers to the limits of the community that is studied by the anthropologist, that is, the village. But if conflicts erupt beyond this preferred scale, do they not belong to 'data'? Alas, the anthropologist had to experince this sudden and radical broadening of the 'socio-cultural environment' to yet another degree of totality. Thus, the outbreak of the 1967 war between Israel and its Arab neighbors (still excluding Lebanon) brought home the intensive entanglements of remoted villages with wider political developments in the Middle East. The ethnographer was inevitably caught up in this wider conflict while conducting fieldwok. In the dissertation, Rothenberger describes how the fact that he was a citizen of the powerful country which many Arabs believed that actively supported Israel in its war against Egypt and Syria has brought him in a very difficult position in the village. He came thus to realize that his "continued presence would probably cause conflict, chiefly between villagers and others from the area who sincerely believed that the Americans and British have actively aided the Israelis in the war as was reported in the Arab radio and newspapers, and villagers who especially were our friends and who therefore might feel compelled to defend my own or even the official American denials of this participation" (ibid.). Overwhelmed by "the real probability of conflict of this kind, which was not the kind of conflict (he) had come to study"

[26] The idea that conflicts provide excellent empirical entrypoints for the study of social order in small-scale societies enjoyed a growing, if not widespread, acceptance among many US and British anthropologists of that time. The seminal book by Max Gluckman of the Manchester School pioneered this trend (1955). This Marxist-inspired anthropology perceived conflict as inherent and natural, and not a disruption, in the social order.

(ibid.), the U.S. anthropologist was forced to abandon the "field" three months earlier than initially planned and hastily return home. I choose to refer extensively to this work, not because I believe that the anthropologist had to say despite mounting suspicion, although I do believe that his denial of US participation in the war was unacceptable due to ethical and political reasons. I am more concerned with a disciplinary stance in ethical and analytical sense, as it is manifested in the last quote, namely the "conflict he has not come to study". Granted, no one can object his decision to depart from a place in which suspicion may have turned risky for his physical well-being. Yet, the way he excludes the wider conflict from his 'study' is, I would argue, characteristic of a shortsighted anthropology, which, largely concerned with metropolitan theories, was in denial of dramatic contexts in the 'field'.[27]

The next example is yet another anthropological work that is based on fieldwork in rural Lebanon, but published ten years later than the previous one. The ethnography by *Cathie J. Witty* (1980) has a similar title ('Mediation and Society – Conflict Management in Lebanon') and, needless to say, a similar scope to Rothenberger's.[28] Witty also sought to show how conflicts are mediated and resolved in the Lebanese context, but the novelty of her approach consisted in the attempted comparison between a "rural Middle eastern village" and "an eastern metropolitan US community" (ibid:x). This particular (and in anthropological context, quite 68aries68tric) comparison was nevertheless regarded as the empirical template for the testing of a certain theory, namely the mediation theory. The idea was, simply put, that the study of mediation and conflict resolution in rural Lebanon could provide insights to similar settings in urban America: "'Mediation and Society' is a theoretical and empirical inquiry into the nature of mediation and its relation to people, communities, and social systems. Lawyers, social scientists, policy planners, judges, and citizens interested in more responsive legal institutions will find the theory of mediation and the two comparative case studies – one Lebanese and one American – *useful in*

[27] For a critical assessment of the notion of the 'field' in anthropology see (Ferguson and Gupta 1997).

[28] It might be helpful here to add that both Rothenberger and Witty were students of Laura Nader, who was actively engaged in countering the Eurocentric assumptions behind the proliferation of different versions of conflict resolution in the West, such as the ADR (see introduction).

predicting and planning 69aries69tric69 alternatives to district and municipal courts in the United States." (ibid., emphasis added). To be sure, this explanation appears somewhat inexplicable, if not grotesque. However, it can be understood within the particular socio-political context of the intense debates within academic and activist circles in the United States in the end of the 1970's and the beginning of the 1980's. As I briefly mentioned in the introduction, the main source of controversy was the nascent ADR movement (Alternative Dispute Resolution), the proponents of which supported the expansion and adaptation of extra-judicial forms of dispute resolution in the legal system.

This is arguably the context within which the author conducts her research, namely to predict and plan meditational alternatives to district and municipal courts in the United States. The Lebanese example serves thus as a background to an American experience. In contrast to Rothenberger, Witty was not planning to use the study of conflict and conflict resolution as a *window* through which to understand local Lebanese society; She is instead interested in contributing to debates about alternative forms of justice within her own American society. To be sure, there is nothing fallacious or unethical in such intentions. After all, anthropology is about the Other as it is about oneself.

However, the real problem begins when the author's strong commitment to the U.S. debates blinds her methodological lens. First of all, there is the issue of comparability between rural Lebanon and urban America. The author not only argues that these two settings bear striking socio-political similarities and that they seem only superficially different, but also that the mediation processes in these different conetxs are somewhat identical (cf. Joseph 1982). Second, as Joseph also argues, Witty's noble political aims drive her to draw a rosy image of the observed mediation processes, while Lebanon is rampaged by a brutal civil war. Instead of reflecting on this in regard to her findings (after all the book was published well five years into the Civil War), Witty appears as if she describes another country, asking, for example, "why is mediation so well developed in the Middle East setting?" (ibid.:ix). While it can be definitely argued that mediation of interpersonal conflicts in Lebanon is a process "intimately connected to the social fabric of

people's lives" (ibid.), it can be also argued that the absolute absence of any mention to the ongoing war must be attributed to a strong bias towards political and academic priorities in the metropoly. Lebanese anthropologist Suad Joseph makes a similar point: "a testing of predictive theory on conflict and mediation in Lebanon carried out in 1972-73 and published in 1980 would have benefited from consideration of the biggest conflict – the war that erupted in 1975. Carrying out my own research in urban Lebanon from 1971 to 1973, it seemed clear to me that the imminent social collapse was affecting all levels of economic, political, and social relationships" (Joseph, ibid. 219).

To conclude my small survey in anthropological work before and during the Civil War, it seems that, for both Rothenberger and Witts, ethnographic research has fallen victim to analytical and political consideration that stemmed from the metropolitan centers of academic production and not from a sensitivity to the anthropologist's own field. To paraphrase a controversial essay by Starn about the Andean anthropologists (Starn 1991), it seems that the ethnographers on that side of the world have been *missing the war* in Lebanon.

The War of the Books[29]

Unable to sense the suppressed vibrations underneath the carefully crafted mask of normality, it seems that most of Lebanon scholars were caught aghast upon the outbreak of the war. Established Lebanese historian Albert Hourani reprimands this failure in a characteristic tone. Referring to an edited volume that published the papers of a conference about the features of the Lebanese political system by a group of historians and political scientists at the University of Chicago, he laments the tremendous absence of any foreshadow for the upcoming catastrophe: "Anyone who has turned to that book during the last months of civil war in Lebanon, in the hope

[29] This title is an allusion to the typical format according to which different phases of the Lebanese Civil War were named, such as the 'war of the mountain' (*Harb al-Jabal,* between 1983-1984), the 'battle of the hotels' (1975-1977), and the 'war of the camps' (*Harb al-Khayamat,* 1984-1989).

that it would help him to understand what was happening, must have felt that something had been left out of it." (Hourani 1976, 33).[30]

Indeed, this statement could have been easily extended to include many more, for whom both the outbreak of the war and the fiercity of the fighting has rendered Lebanon an unfamiliar place, but at the same time a place that had to become familiar again. It seems that in the direct aftermath of the hostilities words, such as 'enigma', 'conundrum', and 'riddle' were widely used among scholars to refer to Lebanon's predicament with abrupt and brutal violence. For instance, this is how the first edited volume produced after the eruption of violence introduces itself: "The Civil War in Lebanon has presented the *enigma* of an apparently sophisticated and prosperous society destroying itself over issues incomprehensible to the rest of the world. The essays which form this book are an attempt by six authors to understand the background to the present crisis" (Owen 1976 emphasis added).[31] Arguably, the widespread violence prompted scholarly debate on the causes, effects and outcomes. As such, it created a discursive space within which diverse opinions and arguments could be communicated, circulated, and countered. It is within this discursive space that the volume discussed above aimed at making a difference in an effort to highlight the background of the *crisis.* Indeed, the volume already suggests a cause of the war, namely the system's resistance to change: "It is towards an understanding of this system, of its resistance to change, of the conflict which threatened its breakdown and of the rival attempts to put it together again that these essays are directed" (ibid.).

Arguably, after the initial dumbfoundment drifted away, the tensions within the discursive space of scholarship and public writing that was opened up through the outbreak of the Lebanese War reflected the antagonisms on the ground. To be sure, the spectrum of the explanations offered was broad and the disagreements frequent. In general, most of them referred to the extent of the

[30] The book that Hourani refers to is an edited volume by Leonard Binder (1966). It might be interesting here to note a little bit of context, without however hinting to conspiracy. As Timothy Mitchell notes, binder was an American who had fought in the Israeli army in the 1948-49 Palestine war while a student at Harvard and had begun learning Arabic when taken prisoner of war in Jordan (Mitchell 2003, 10).

impact of local, national, regional and more global factors upon the war. As the following brief review will demonstrate, the influences were many and the arguments rather complex. Some scholars were drawn closer to the theory of the 'proxy war', which suggested that the Lebanese Civil War must be situated within the greater context of the Cold War confrontation. Others were rather eager to focus on a political system that was reproducing economic inequality and was in dire need of reform in regards to issues of social justice. In short, they saw "the crisis of the Lebanese capitalism" as the backdrop to Civil War (Nasr 1978).[32] The supporters of the first view tended to regard Lebanon as a proxy battlefield among the Soviet Union and the USA, and their regional allies, Syria and Israel respectively. The followers of the latter would depict the Civil War as the apex of the counter-revolution organized by the Lebanese right wing forces in collaboration with regional and global powers. However, as this brief review will hopefully demonstrate, it is rather difficult to draw clear-cut lines among the camps.

Arguably, a characteristic representative of the proxy war model was *Edward Azar*, a Lebanese political scientist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who argued that the problem with Lebanon lies in the 'intervention of regional and international groups and powers who easily destabilized Lebanon because of the weak state and the unconcerned and materially preoccupied society' (Azar 1984, 50; see also Azar 1983). However, Azar also found certain flaws within the Lebanese society, such as for example, the phenomenon of 'maHsubbiyya*',* which he defined as "a tradition of loyalty to leading forces and families in the country since feudal times" (ibid.). This, he submitted, was a further obstacle to progress and modernization in Lebanon. Yet, overall, Azar seems to defend the system of political confessionalism in Lebanon, which he regards as capable of institutionalizing channels of cooperation and of promoting moderation, rather than extremism, "if administered well" (Azar 1984:46).

Prominent Lebanese historian Albert Hourani argues for another perspective on the war altogether. Although he partially subscribes to the argument about the fragility of the Lebanese

[32] Supporters of this view were usually found among the contributors of the journal 'MERIP - Middle East Research and Information Project'. For a tiny selection from a vast archive see (MERIP 1976; MERIP 1974; Al-Haytham 1976).

state and thus the propensity of the country to turn into a proxy battlefield, Hourani criticises essentializations of the sectarian politics in Lebanon, including Azar's approach on the tradition of the 'maHsoubiyya'. Instead, he argues that articular attention must be shed to the another division of interests and visions in the country, namely between the "ideologists" of the mountain and those of the city (Hourani 1976). Georges Corm, Lebanese economist and former Minister of finance, builds on Hourani's city-mountain division while highlighting that the main active militia forces were the ones who claimed of acting in the name of the three historical communities of the Mountain: the Maronite, the Druze and the Shi'i. However, Corm regards as the major failure of the Lebanese state its inability or unwillingness to adopt a strong policy of social egalitarianism, which could enhance Lebanon's resistance to regional pressures. Finally though, Corm perceives the regional tensions as the decisive factor for the particular forms that the War took, such as the spread of militias, for example: "The emergence of the Lebanese militia is more the result of regional tensions than of a civil war which was smouldering in the very foundations of Lebanese society" (Corm, 1994:264).

It may suffice to conclude this brief overview with the words of a scholar, who, writing four years after the end of the war, attempted to do justice to the the mosaic of the contending views over the reasons of the Lebanese Civil War in the following way: "These conflicts include domestic disagreement over Lebanon's identity and role in the region (i.e. differing perceptions of Lebanon's raison d' etre and, by extension, its foreign policy orientations), domestic disagreement over the sectarian-based power-sharing arrangements of the political system, domestic socio-economic discontent and mounting pressures imposed by external players (notably the Palestinians and Israel)" (Collings 1994, 2). The Lebanese Civil War officially ended with the signing of the *Taif Agreement* on October 1989 (Mansour 1993). For many, the Lebanese Civil War produced 'la ghalib, la maghlub' (no victor, no vanquished). Whether this was the case, it is not up to us to say. However, one might be able to say something along same lines about the other war, namely the war of the books about the War, which also ended without victors nor vanquished.

Lebanonizing Lebanon, Rewriting Violence

> "Just beyond the horizon of current events lie two possible political futures—both bleak, neither democratic. The first is a retribalization of large swaths of humankind by war and bloodshed: a threatened Lebanonization of national states in which culture is pitted against culture, people against people, tribe against tribe—a Jihad in the name of a hundred narrowly conceived faiths against every kind of interdependence, every kind of artificial social cooperation and civic mutuality. The second is being borne in on us by the onrush of economic and ecological forces that demand integration and uniformity and that mesmerize the world with fast music, fast computers, and fast food—with MTV, Macintosh, and McDonald's, pressing nations into one commercially homogenous global network: one McWorld tied together by technology, ecology, communications, and commerce. The planet is falling precipitantly apart *AND* coming reluctantly together at the very same moment." (Barber 1992).

These lines introduce an article that proved exceptionally influential throughout the entire 1990s and, arguably, experienced a vivid revival after the 9/11 attacks in 2001. Apparently, the reason why I chose to quote it at length here was not the depth of Barber's general argument.[33] Rather, I wanted to demonstrate the immense utility (and instrumentalization) of a particular image of Lebanon's predicament with violence in sensationalist accounts about the world order after the collapse of the Eastern bloc. The formula of the 'Lebanonization' of the world functions here both as frame of analysis and as doomsday scenario for the entire humanity. However, this is not my main argument. The gist of the argument in this section, which is also that of the chapter altogether, is, in fact, the reverse version of the thesis on the Lebanonization of the world. In brief, I argue that the image of Civil War Lebanon underwent retrospectively a discursive transformation that led to its Lebanonization, that is, its depiction as a situation of "war and bloodshed in which culture is pitted against culture, people against people, tribe against tribe".

I submit, thus, that the rise of the paradigm of the 'ethnic conflict' in the metropolitan centers of academic production had tremendous impact on the ways that Civil War violence was depicted in

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[33] For a comprehensive response to Barber's simplifying binary see Mitchel's 'McJihad: Islam in the US Global Order' (Mitchell 2002b).

academic and other expert accounts. In other words, the globalized discourse of *Lebanonization* had little, if anything, to do with Lebanon as a historical entity, apart from the fact that it was eventually introduced into the country as a dominant explanatory framework for both the past violence and the post-war tensions. In this sense, the notion *Lebanonization* should be perceived rather as a political tool that was produced thousands miles aways from Lebanon than a sincere effort to understand the latter's predicament with violence. Needless to say, there is a strong conceptual affinity between the scientific concept of 'ethnic conflict' and the easily visualized (and therefore sensationalist) counterpart. This does not mean to say, however, that the essentialist and reductive counterpart cannot be used for scientific purposes. For example, Lebanese scholar Boutros Labaki wrote about the prospects of 'Lebanization of Yugoslavia', suggesting that Lebanon could be a model for managing diversity (Labaki 1999). On the other hand, French scholar Elizabeth Picard recognized "similar patterns" between the conflicts in Lebanon and in Yugoslavia (Picard 1996). Placed in this perspective, the civil war in Lebanon was interpreted as "in reality only the first in an unfinished series of civil wars fought along ethnic divisions and complicated by the intervention of external forces – states and international and transnational organizations" (Picard 2002, vii).

Arguably, what allows for such comparisons is not only the assumption that difference is based on "ethnic divisions," but also a particular conceptualization of the violence in these conflicts as particularly incomprehensible from a rational point of view. Therefore, this approach also reproduced an image of the conflicts under investigation as utterly brutal. To be sure, the war over Yugoslavia provided what the proponents of this view saw as indisputable empirical evidence for the brutality and irrationality of ethnic conflicts. Within the new discursive environment, Lebanon's violent past was inevitably reassessed and its history rewritten. This process I suggest to call the *Lebanonization of Lebanon*. In the following pages I intend to show some of its effects on academic accounts of the violence that plagued the country for that long. In particular, I use two different bodies of scholarship as the evidence to my argument. First, I rely on a selection of widely circulated and celebrated academic books about the violence and the

conflict in Lebanon, which I briefly review and flesh out the main argument of each. Then, I show how each of this account, despite variations in methodology, scope and overall conceptualization, might be read as different ways that re-inforce the same thing, namely, a certain image of the socio-political violence in Lebanon as a typical case of 'ethnic conflict,' whose patterns and origins are sectarian.

Second, I turn my attention towards another body of academic scholaship, which I examine with the same questions in mind. I look at the ways that Lebanon has been framed within the specialized academic scholarship of peacemaking, in order to test my hypothesis that the depiction of Lebanon as a typical case of 'ethnic conflict' lead to further theorizations in the field of peacemaking. Therefore, I suggest exploring the literature on Lebanon in the pages of the two most influential journals in the field of peace studies, that is, the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* and the *Journal of Peace Research* in the period that covers the beginning of the Civil War (1975) until May 2008. My survey shows a number of things, the most essential of which is a typology of patterns, according to which problematizations of violence in Lebanon are usually framed. I submit that a closer examination of the patterns in their historical context might further confirm my general argument about the dominant tendency by metropolitan academic discourses after the end of the War to frame violence in Lebanon as a typical case of 'ethnic conflict', which then invites certain ways to think and act about peace and peacemaking.

Salibi: 'Many Mansions'

To be sure, Kamal Salibi's *House of Many Mansions* (1993) can be read in many ways. First, as yet another historical account of the creation of the modern state of Lebanon. Second, as a fundamental critique of the Maronite version that regards Lebanon as the heir of ancient Phoenicia (he argues instead that if there were any descendants of this people, these must be the Sunni merchants of the Lebanese coast). Third, as an attack to the idea that Lebanon has always been a place in which people persecuted by the Muslims or the Ottomans found refuge (he shows instead that the Maronites were persecuted by the Byzantines, their fellow Christians). Fourth, as

a refutation of the Arab nationalist version of Lebanon as an colonial contruction and an aberration to the Arab nation. Fifth, and crucially, as a political invitation to the inhabitants of the 'many mansions' to coexist peacefully in the 'house' that is known as Lebanon.[34] I would argue that Salibi's otherwise illuminating account is ultimately flawed due to the author's commitment to a political program that mistakingly taken as an analytical framework.

Hence, the book is successful as an effort to debunk historical accounts that seek to describe Lebanon in monolithic terms, either as ancient homeland or merely as a colonial aberration. The book begins with the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent maneuvres by colonial France and Britain to control as many and as crucial territories left behind by the Ottomans. Then, he dwells for considerable time about the project of 'Greater Lebanon' put forward by the Maronite elites in the 1920s with the hesitated agreement of the French colonial rulers. The book is arguably at its best when Salibi details the historical controversy around that project. On one hand, the open disagreement by many Arab nationalists, among which were not only Muslims, but also Christians (albeit, mainly Greek Orthodox and less Maronite). On the other hand, the multiplicity of means that the Maronite elites used in order to ensure their hegemony over the newly born state. Finally, he acknowledges the inherent contradiction in such a project from which, at least half if not most, of its citizens feel detached.

However, despite this, Salibi seems inherently captive of his concept of 'many mansions'. Although he describes in detail a story of competing national and regional projects between local elites, colonial administrations and disenchanted populations that often cut across sectarian lines, in the end he suggests the concept of *mansions*, which, to the surprise of the reader, is used interchangeably with that of *religions*: "But it was certainly no accident that the original proponents of Lebanism in the country were almost exclusively Christians, and for the most part

[34] Kamal Salibi is emeritus professor of History at the American University of Beirut. A Protestant in faith, he earned his PhD at SOAS under the supervision of Bernard Lewis, one of the most infuential Orientalists, severely criticised by Edward Said in Orientalism (1978). Lewis is the author of *The Roots of the Muslim Rage*, in which the later Huntingtonian thesis on the 'Clash of Civilizations' found its initial articulations.

Maronites, while the most unbending proponents of Arabism, as a community, were the Muslims. Clearly, in both cases, what was actually said by way of argument on the surface covered something else underneath: the source of the problems" (Salibi, 1993:37). This statement is utterly surprising, if not upsetting, especially when Salibi spends most of the chapter demonstrating how the "proponents of Lebanism" were, at the beginning, constituted only by a Maronite intellectual and economic elite, which was clustered around the Maronite Patriarch. Salibi also describes how this particular fraction of the population welcomed the colonial projects in the region and thereby disenchanted not only most of the citizens of the new state, but also almost all those of its neighbors. In short, he tells a story in which 'sectarianism' is not a primordial element, but a political tool in the hands of the powerful. Yet, he seems overtly reluctant to recognize this. [35]

Instead, he opts for an interpretation of the rich empirical material through an ahistorical and primoridalist concept of 'mansions' that, arguably, enables him to state his solution to the problem. Salibi's political mission is, I would argue, implicitly encapsulated in the following aphorism: "To create a country is one thing; to create a nationality is another" (ibid.). Whether the creation of a successful Lebanese 'nationality' is the panacea for the "problems" in Lebanon is not up to us to say. What is clear though is that Salibi's understanding of the solution is premised on a translation trick, through which complex dynamics of violence are substituted with the monolithic idea of the ethnic conflict, amiably depicted as a 'house of many mansions.'

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[35] This, however, is not the case with Lebanese historian Oussama Makdissi, who treats political sectarianism as a product of historical coningencies and colonial strategies (2000). Makdissi notes, for example, how western travelers and missionaries were the first ones to "construct" the tribal character of Lebanon even before the interference by the colonial powers. In regard of the uses of the sectarianism, he makes another important argument, which involves the ways that the Lebanese political elite chose to narrate the history of the past wars after their end. He argues that there was an inherent interest among them to label violence as „sectarian", so that they could conceal (or keep ignoring) what Makdissi calls the „truly distinctive feature of that era", namely the entrance of the people of Lebanon, the „ahali", into the politics of a „socially hierarchical and extremely unrepresentative society" (ibid.25). This produced the desperate desire of the feuding elites to maintain their power in the social order by trying to develop a viable narrative of „Ta'ifa" (arabic: sect) as nation that at once excluded rival elites of different taifas and sustained communal hierarchies" (ibid.).

Hanf: A Conflict of ‘ Foreigners’

German political scientist Theodor Hanf published a massive book on Lebanon in 1993, titled ‘Coexistence in wartime Lebanon: Rise of a Nation, Decline of a State’ (Hanf 1993). The book comprises of 712 pages, the bulk of which covers the analysis of quantitative data, statistical surveys and opinions polls of different parts of the Lebanese population during the war. The main argument of the book is manifested on its title, i.e. the common experience of the war contributed to the rise of a common sense of belonging and identity among the Lebanese. The argument is supported by the results of surveys conducted by the author over several years in war-time Lebanon.

Theer are many interesting aspects in this encyclopaedic effort to analyze the Lebanese conflict through the opinions of the people who experienced it. However, this analysis is most of the times conducted against the background of the analyst’s strong opinions, not only about Lebanon, but also about scientific theories of ethnicity, consociationalism, violence and, last but not least, data assessment. To begin with the particular context, it is maybe telling that Hanf draws a rather rosy image of pre-war Lebanon, namely as a “melting pot” (ibid.199), in which people used to live in “reasonable harmony” (ibid.2). Hanf effectively juxtaposes this image with a very particular use of the term ‘foreigners’. For example, at a certain point he inserts that most of Lebanon’s problems before the war were problems of ‘foreigners’ (ibid.200), while his understanding of the term is so wide that includes anyone who does not hold the Lebanese nationality: Palestinians, Syrians, and Kurds. Yet, the author should be aware that in Lebanon these categories of people do not signify the same meaning of the word ‘foreigner’ as, for example, in Germany, since many Palestinians and Syrians, and surely many Kurds, have been living in the country for decades without being granted citizenship due to a political decision by the Lebanese state. In fact, they were *made* foreigners by the Lebanese state, and regarded as such by certain fractions of the Lebanese nationalists, such as the Maronite elites.

In general, Hanf's fascinating data is unfortunately filtered through a strong analytical bias of the theories of ethnicity and consociationalism, which are given a substantial coverage in the introduction of the book. This, I argue, explains a highly arbitrary and Eurocentric use of the concept of the 'foreigner', which depicts Lebanon as a well-functioning and relatively homogeneous society until the foreigners invaded it. Ever since, it has turned into an 'ethnic conflict' imported and imposed by foreign ethnicities.

Khalaf: 'Communal conflict'

Lebanese sociologist and historian Samir Khalaf discusses his country's predicament with violence in a treatise titled 'Civil and Uncivil Violence in Lebanon: A History of the Internationalization of Communal Conflict' (2002). What is new in this study, says Khalaf, is the way that the historical material is theorized, namely through the combined analytical frameworks of a selection of two distinct literature bodies: violence and ethnicity. The author draws heavily on these theoretical strands to the extent that he borrows from them his too main concepts, i.e. 'uncivil violence' and 'internationalization of communal conflict.'

In regards to the first term, Khalaf claims to utilize Rene Girard's views on the intricate relationship between violence and the sacred (Girard 1977). In brief, Girard's argument is that 'mimetic desire' can lead to a spiral of antagonism between individuals and groups, which may turn into the exercise of excessive violence against an arbitrary enemy. The only way to return to peace would be then to kill the enemy, which would however advance the victim to the status of a sacred object. Arguably, the only element of Girard's thought that features in Khalaf's account is the notion of excessive violence, which the author labels 'uncivil'. The violence is thus *uncivil*, not only because it is brutal, but also because it takes its own dynamic irrespective of what has fueled it at the first place. Then, Khalaf makes a crucial link between that kind of violence and what he calls religious or 'communal conflict', claiming that the former is frequently encountered in cases of the latter. Arguably, this conceptualization guides the entire structure of the book,

which reads as an overview of the bloodiest events in the modern history of Lebanon, including the peasant uprisings of the 19th century.

Indeed, it is fascinating to observe the author's struggle throughout the book to fit a complex and multilayered account of social antagonisms and historical change into an inflexible and reductive concept. An illuminating example of this struggle is the way that the 1860 clashes are portrayed. Hence, although the economic transformations concerning the silk trade with Europe are refereed to as the main reason for the impoverishment of the peasantry and consequently for the revolts, the incidents are finally labelled as a 'communal uprising,' because the *Christians* attacked the *Druze* in order to spread their hegemony over the country. Khalaf acknowledges numerous incidents of intra-communal and inter-class struggles, such as the attack of Christian feudal lords by Christian peasants in 1870. Yet, these incidents do not seem enough to invite a more versatile theoretical framework, which would take other issues, such as class structures, regional and kinship ties, external interventions, economic transformations etc. also into consideration.[36]

Alas, Khalaf tends to return ultimately to the concept of "communal conflict" in order to explain almost everything, to the extent that leaves one wondering about the reasons behind this choice. Yet, a closer llok at Khalaf's second main concept may illucidate this. The notion of 'internationalization of communal conflict' stems from an edited volume by Markus Midlarksy (Midlarsky 1992), in which post-Cold War communal conflicts are said to have an "intractable nature" that may result in "external actors being pulled into the ongoing violence" (ibid. book description). Apart from the fact that this depiction constructs a quite convenient image of the external actors, who are almost dragged unwillingly into intractable conflicts, it creates an

[36] This is, again, not the case with Lebanese historian Fawwaz Trabulsi, who seeks to complicate the image of rigid sectarian communities merely fighting each other constantly. For example, Trabulsi quotes a memorandum by the people of Zahle to the French consul, Poujade, in 1843, which clearly demonstrates elements of class consciousness among the peasantry: "We are sure that the Druze attack us because they are forced to do so by their *muqata'jis* (leaders), even by baton blows. In fact, as long as the leaders enjoy privileges and immunities, Lebanon will never enjoy peace (…) Peace may well be achieved between Druze and Christian peasants but not with their leaders, who will always acquire unacceptable prerogatives over our brothers» (Trabulsi 2007:25). Trabulsi notes that such declarations spell out "the amalgam between communitarian belonging and social status" (ibid.).

imaginary geography of the post-Cold War World, in which communal conflicts are the order of the day. Yet, as we saw in the case of Lebanon, this idea can only sound plausible after a multiplicity of other factors have been systematically rendered 'external.'

In general, Khalaf's account misses the unique opportunity to interpret his material in less manipulative ways. Although the pervasive nature of communal ties and loyalties in Lebanon cannot be denied, there are hardly questions asked about the ways and the processes through which these ties are forged and maintained. At the same time, the eclipse of mere utterances on colonialism or similar forces of translocal qualities is more than disturbing. On the face of these remarks, Khalaf's book might be better described less as a demonstration of how the conflict in Lebanon was internationalized, but rather how the theory of 'communal conflict' was *lebanonized*.

Johnson: 'Honor-Shame'

The last book in this review, written by anthropologist Michael Johnson and titled *All Honourable Men* (2001) is presented by the author as a *corrigendum* to his previous *Class and Conflict in Beirut* (1986). Indeed, the first chapter, emphatically called "An Auto-critique," entails an effort to refute some of the arguments made in Johnson's earlier work: "Looking back at that book, I feel there are at least two things wrong with it. First, it is perhaps too materialist or neo-marxist in its approach, and certainly fails to deal adequately with the emotional affectivity of confessional allegiance in Lebanese society. Secondly, it ends on too gloomy a note" (2001, 5).

In his 2001 book, Johnson appears as a rehabilitated Marxist, who seeks to do away with the *materialist* explanations. After this reflective self-critique, one might would expect an even richer analysis premised on a multiplicity of theoretical approaches and empirical elements. Alas, Johnson's alternative to Marxist materialism seems to be a rather unpolished version of Eurocentric culturalism, which is, almost entirely built around the concept of 'honour-shame':

"An understanding of Lebanese patriarchy, and a culture of honour and shame, is crucial if we are to make sense of the emotional aspects of confessional conflict."[37]

The centrality of the argument is encapsulated on the book's title and, in the book, the validity of the argument is backed by chilling narratives of horrific details of a number of massacres, perpetrated by different militias during the Lebanese Civil War, such as the raping of young girls, the cutting open of the wombs of pregnant women, and the castration of men. These actions are incomprehensible to the rational mind, says Johnson, and can be only 'explained' if we situate them within an emotional and confessional framework, exarcebated by values such as honour and shame. To be sure, the author has read his anthropology and, thus, knows that 'honour and shame' constitutes a celebrated concept in the discipline and was widely applied as a 'metonym' for the Mediterranean basin as a whole (Appadurai 1986a)! Hence, in order to understand the violence in Lebanon we must "situate (it) in its Mediterranean rather than Arab or Middle Eastern context" (Johhson 2001, 13). And for those among his readers that may still remain unconvinced, the author suggests the comparison with the recent, brutal conflicts in Yugoslavia: "What is striking about the civil wars in Lebanon was that the style of violence was so gruesome and nasty, as it was in Bosnia and other provinces of former Yugoslavia. The aim, it seems, was not just to kill the *Other* but to kill in particularly brutal ways, involving the violation and humiliation of the enemy community. Here ideas of the self and person are crucially important, ideas closely related to the notions of individual honour and shame" (ibid).

Granted, there is no apparent reason to attempt to refute the argument about the Mediterranean basin as a unified region characterized from a culture of 'honor shame.' Others have done it much

[37] It is perhaps worth adding here that the argument about the preeminence of *Lebanese patriarchy* is introduced with an anecdote, which was narrated to the author by a Lebanese back in 1972. In the story, Marilyn Monroe stands in front of the paradise gates, and Jesus, Mohammed and Moses throw the dice in order to decide who is going to have her. Eventually, Jesus wins by cheating. This joke prompts the author to comment that "in a male-dominated society the assumption is that she was not offered a choice"!

more concivicingly.[38] The same goes for the complex issue of militia terror during the Lebanese war.[39] Yet, it is perhaps interesting to explore the amount of work that is required in order to impose an epistemological concept, crafted in the metropolitan centers of academic production, upon the Lebanese reality. Granted, a series of displacements, manipulations and reinscriptions of the reality on the ground, such as the division that the author suggests between the major causes of the war in Lebanon (which are to be found within the *Arab* cultural environment, i.e. the rise of Arab nationalism and the ongoing struggle for Palestinian national liberation) and the brutal nature of the conflict (which must be explained if we displace Lebanon from its Arab environment) (ibid. 24).

Indeed, Johnson's previous materialist perspective returns with a vengeance dotted with reproaching and simplified overtones when he refers to the causes of the war, for instance. Thus, he suggests that the irrational and unintelligible violence, which he so meticulously narrated in detail, could have been avoided "had not been for the PLO's militarization of Lebanese politics (and the responsive militarization of Maronites)" (ibid.24). In fact, "all the socioeconomic and confessional tensions in Lebanon could have been contained by the Lebanese state" (ibid.).

The works reviewed above manifest, acknowledged differences notwithstanding, a remarkable resemblance in the willingness to adopt a particular theoretical interpretation of the historical data

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[38] Joao de Pina-Cabral suggests the following in regards to the depiction of the Mediterranean as culturally united area: "The notion of the Mediterranean Basin as a 'culture area' is more useful as a means of distancing Anglo-American scholars from the populations they study than as a way of making sense of the cultural homogeneities and differences that characterize the region" (1989, 399). For anthropological refutations of the concept of honor shame, see (Herzfeld 1980; Gilmore 1987).

[39] For example, Lebanese economist and previous minister of Finance, Georges Corm explains how the warring militias worked "towards common goals, i.e. the building of mini-states along sectarian lines, through a system of totalitarian terror" (1994, 215). Corm then goes on to reprimand those "analysts" who "kept on overlooking this fundamental use of violence and instead preferred to describe the fight as 'spontaneous, quasi-biological struggle between elements of the population labeled 'Christian' and 'Muslim'" (ibid.). Corm also remarks the resistance of the civilian population to be subjected to this kind of sectarian-based rhetoric and practice of violence: "It was the civilian population that spontaneously refused to accept the division of Lebanon into communal ghettos, and demanded freedom of movement. The militias, in order to prevent Lebanese civilians in venturing outside their communal ghettos and their protective cover of 'their' militia, inflicted unspeakable violence on innocents" (ibid. 219).

that spans 150 years of complex socio-political transformations. This practice, arguably, reduces history down to an essentialist process of redeployment of cultural forces, in the form of communalism, confessionalism or "re-tribalism". It is indeed at once striking and sad to see authors with demonstrated analytical accuracy (in the case of Salibi and Khalaf, at least) losing their theoretical saliency under the urge to borrow rigid and narrow concepts produced elsewhere. Instead of demonstrating the ways through which confessionalism, sectarianism and communitarian belonging were instrumentalized as political tools in the complex struggles at different levels of the society (as people like Makdisi, Trabulsi and Corm do), these works reveal rather how powerful, metropolitan academic discourses, clustered around the notion of 'ethnic conflict', found inroads into academic accounts about the past violence in Lebanon. As a result, the 'grammar' of ethnic conflict, in the sense of Wittgenstein, was introduced into the vocabulary of the historiography of Lebanese Civil War and of past periods of violence. In this, these authors seemed to follow sensationalist accounts on the war, such as the ones produced by the majpority of the international media, which "despite the immense complexity of the situation and brutal outside interference, complacently accepted the split between 'Christians' and 'Muslims' as the sole explanation of the conflict" (Corm 1994, 225; see also Beyhoum 1990).

Conclusion: Who Needs 'Ethnic Conflict'?

In the previous pages I offered a cursory reading of selected academic literature on Lebanon in an effort to manifest how violence was (or was not) problematized through different periods (before, during and after the Civil War) and how this happened through the extensive use of analytical concepts and ideas that were mostly developed in the academic metropoly. In particular, I attempted to show that, prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, academic accounts, captive to metropolitan theory models, such as consociationalism and conflict resolution, seemed unable or unwilling to register Lebanon either in terms of structural violence or within regional struggles. The eruption of the war destabilized familiar patterns and opened up a field of controversy and

debate among academics and other writers, which I called 'the war of books'. Finally, after the end of the War, the rise of the paradigm of the ethnic conflict in metropolitan centers of academic production produced not only a new theory but also a new 'grammar' of conflict, in which Lebanon had a nominal place, which is encapsulated in the term 'Lebanonization'. Among wetsren academic and expert circles, Lebanonization emerged as a synonym and a shortcut for sectarian, irrational, self-perpetuating and brutal civil war violence. In my review of four major academic works on Lebanon, I show how this new grammar of conflict was effectively introduced into Lebanon in the post-war years in different ways and through the use of variations of the canon of ethnic conflict, such as communal conflict, many mansions and foreigners and the abuse of anthropological notions, such as the culture of honor-shame.

In the place of a conclusion, one might want to ask two sets of questions that emerge on the face of these developments. First, how can we make sense of this irresistible attractivity of the concept of *ethnic conflict,* despite serious empirical limitations and theoretical shortcomings? What are the gains and the potentialities of such a concept and for which reasons? In brief, paraphrasing Stuart Hall, I ask: Who needs 'ethnic conflict' and why?[40] Second, following Gupta and Ferguson (op.cit), one could ask another set of questions about the particular effects of the dissemination of the concept upon epistemological and socio-political processes of *placemaking*: What kind of discursive configurations are advanced? What sort of institutional responses do they invite? What sorts of mutual formations do they produce? Throughout this chapter, I attempted to offer, implicitly or explicitly, some first answers to these cmplex questions. To sum up, I suggest that we look at three distinct groups of people, who might, for different reasons, *need* (the widespread dissemination of the explanatory framework of) 'ethnic conflict', namely Lebanese political elites, metropolitan academic circles interested in global interventions and the novel and expanding field of peace experts.

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[40]Introducing a seminal volume on *Cultural Identity* Hall asks the question "who needs identity"? It is posed after the citation of multiple critiques against the concept of identity. His second possible answer to the question tackles the following issue: "In relation to what set of problems does the irreducibility of the concept, identity, emerge?" (Hall 1996:2). In the end, Hall defends the choice of the term.

In the first case, it would suffice perhaps to repeat the words of two Lebanese scholars about the ways that sectarian depictions of past violence would serve the continuation of rule by the current political elites. Historian Oussama Makdissi claimed that there is a vested interest among the elites to depict Lebanon's history of violence as primarily sectarian, because such narratives sanction their leadership in historical terms and helps them to consolidate authority over populations, which can be mobilized under the sectarian card. In historical terms, a sectarian reading obscures and denies the emergence of the *people* as a "new historical factor" in Lebanon (Makdissi op.cit). Economist Georges Corm shows how a sectarian reading of the Civil War shifts the ways that responsibility and culpability for the crimes of militias against civilians might be allocated among the members of these militias. Thus, sectarian readings tend to diffuse culpability into the entirety of an amorphous cultural group, a sect, a tribe, etc. As members of the group are depicted as cultural dopes, leaders and perpetuators of violence appear as mere defenders of the particular *cultural identity* of the group, which have been under threat. Hence, 'ethnic conflict' serves as a discursive mechanism that at the same time reduces the members of a 'sect' down to the level of perpetrators of irrational and unspeakable violence and exonerates those who introduced and expanded the system of terror over civilians: "The foreign press (…) tended to view the emergence of the militia system as a logical and natural consequence of what it considered to be a civil war between Christians and Muslims, both of whom had some legitimate claims. This perspective obscured the international community's understanding of the criminal nature of militia activities" (Corm, op.cit. 221).

At the same time, no militia leader could be held morally or legally responsible for the crimes: "The 150.000 who died were seen as the victims of an abstract, quasi-biological fate which befell the Lebanese, and not the victims of blood and flesh militias chieftains (…) The Lebanese habit of internalizing fear of militia chieftains combines with a truncated understanding and analysis of the conflict to perpetuate a belief in the abstract, collective responsibility of the "Muslims" or the "Christians." The result is a paralysis of all political action aimed at identifying those actually

responsible for the violence and developing the means necessary to neutralize or even punish them". (Corm op.cit.: 226-227).

Second, the effective dissemination of the image of a world that is divided between the prospects of 'McWorld' versus 'Jihad' enables new roles for the academic circles in metropolitan centers who might be willing to contribute not only to the understanding of this new reality, but also and mainly to other, more active forms of engagement. For instance, the editors of the volume titled "The international spread of ethnic conflict – Fear, diffusion and escalation" (Lake and Rothchild 1998), quote, in the opening chapter, tellingly called "Spreading Fear: The Genesis of Transational Ethnic Conflict," the following passage from Bill Clinton's pledge to bomb Serbia and to deploy NATO troops in Yugoslavia: "Without us... the conflict that already has claimed so many people could spread like poison throughout the entire region" (ibid. p. 3). After this quote, the editors pose the two "central questions" that the volume seeks to address: "First, how, why, and when do ethnic conflicts spread across national borders? Second, how can such transnational ethnic conflicts be best managed?" (ibid.) Arguably, new problematizations of violence on global scale, enabled through the fearful image of widespread ethnic conflicts, presented scholars, such as those above, with new challenges in their efforts to aid political elites to stop cpnflicts before these spread "like poisons". To be sure, problematizations invite new spaces of theory and practice within which particular responses, measures, strategies, initiatives etc. are expected. Indeed, the final chapter is entitled "Toward practical initiatives: Ethnic Fear and Global Engagement," in which the authors suggest a number of responses and types of intervention, which are recommended to "external actors," "third parties," "the international community" etc. At a more comprehesive level, the new geographies of ethnic conflict might contribute to the emergence of new modes of division of labour in the social sciences, especially in the face of what observers have termed the the "crisis of the old area studies" (Mitchell 2003). Hence, novel sets of problematizations could provide metropolitican academic circles with new fields of legitimacy and engagement.

Lastly, the pressing need to deploy a number of responses vis-à-vis neatly defined and thoroughly problematized forms of culturalized, sectarian, ethnic violence, which were adequately identified as threats to global order, has given rise to even more specialized forms of expertise. In the next chapters, we will see how, in the years that followed the end of the Civil War, new forms of expertise were deployed, new practices of conflict resolution were advanced and new theories of peacemaking were developed in Lebanon and beyond.

Chapter Two Lebanon's Leviathan

Toward an Anthropology of 'State Failure'

Le savant n'est pas l'homme qui fournit les 90aries réponses;
c'est celui qui pose les 90aries questions.[41] (Lévi-Strauss 1964)

On 7 May 2008, deadly clashes between armed wings of rival political parties broke out in Lebanon. Major streets of the capital city Beirut, densely populated neighborhoods of the northern city of Tripoli, and main roads in the mountainous eastern Shouf region turned into battlefields literally overnight. The government's declared will to dismantle the telecommunications network operated separately by the strongest party of the opposition, Hizbollah (Party of God), and to remove the security officer in charge at Beirut International Airport, who was believed to be affiliated with the same party, prompted a violent response. In the past, Hizbollah had often signaled that such a move would be perceived as an existential threat to the infrastructure of what it calls 'Al Mukawama' (the Resistance) and a *casus belli* with regard to the internal conflict (Bahout 2008).

That evening, Hizbollah's secretary-general, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, delivered a televised message from an undisclosed location, calling upon members of the Resistance to protect the latter and to "cut off the hands" that threaten it.[42] In the aftermath of the speech, armed groups were deployed around government buildings (Parliament and the president's office), residences of government figures (the prime minister and party leaders), and strategic streets in the capital and elsewhere in order to force the government to withdraw the decrees. These groups engaged in deadly clashes with armed, pro-government fighters, and relatively soon thereafter, the

[41] The wise man is not he who provides the right answers; it is he who poses the right questions.

[42] Text cited from televised speech given by Secretary-General Nasrallah in Lebanon on 8 May 2008, http://nowlebanon.com/NewsArchiveDetails.aspx?ID=41861.

government conceded defeat. In what had lasted for three days and later became known as the 'May Events' (*aHdath ayyar*), 80 people had died and more than 200 had been injured.[43]

During the entire year of 2008, I was conducting fieldwork among peace experts in Beirut. As destiny would have it, a few days before the May Events, I traveled to Greece for a university talk. As soon as Beirut International Airport reopened, I was on the first flight from Athens. I entered my flat, located in the district of Hamra, which was the epicenter of the clashes, only to find that all of the windows had been broken, the walls were replete with bullet holes, and a critically injured air conditioner was dangling hazardously.[44] Without losing much time over the casualties at home, I resumed what one might call fieldwork in a post-violence environment. Now that the fighting with machine guns was over, it was time for heated debates, mutual accusations, and, of course, peace talks. In the previous period, I had already established cordial relationships with Lebanese as well as 'internationals', who were regarded—by themselves or by others—as 'experts in peace'. Among them were analysts for peace or crisis think tanks, employees in peacebuilding NGOs, and officers of different UN agencies. Needless to say, their views differed on many issues.

Despite this, an overall consensual response toward the May Events was striking. At the core of such surprising unanimity was the imaginary of a 'strong state' as the ultimate solution, as the antidote to perils such as corruption, civil strife, and armed violence. Notably, the recent surge in violence between opposing camps prompted comparisons with the country's civil war, which had lasted 15 years, from 1975 to 1990. Behind the rhetorical effect of such historical comparisons was the idea of a failing and absent state. Although not explicitly referred to as

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[43] In 2005, the dates 8 March and 14 March were marked by huge demonstrations in favor of and against the Syrian presence in Lebanon, respectively. They came only weeks after the assassination of Lebanon's prime minister, Rafiq al-Hariri. The 14 March demonstration, labeled by (mostly Western) observers as the beginning of the 'Cedar Revolution', led to the end of the long Syrian military presence that dated back to 1976. The 14 March coalition was regarded to be pro-Western, supported by the US and Saudi Arabia, while the 8 March coalition was backed by Syria and Iran. For a relatively representative selection of the diametrically opposing opinions on the May Events, see Saghiyeh (2008) and Salem (2008). See also "The Lebanon Crisis," Bitterlemons, 22 May 2008, http://www.bitterlemons-international.org/previous.php?opt=1&id=228.

[44] For a somewhat novelistic account of my return to the flat, see Kosmatopoulos (2008b).

such, the image of Lebanon's failing Leviathan was able to unite politicians, who would otherwise fight over almost everything.[45] The image-cum-argument basically reiterates the familiar Hobbesian concept according to which humans are always ready to resort to violence in order to defend personal and group interests, and civil wars can be avoided only through the establishment of strong sovereigns.[46] Further, expressions such as "Mah fih dawleh bi Lubnan" (There is no state in Lebanon) or rhetorical questions such as "Wen el dawleh?" (Where is the state?) dominate the popular discourse and have their sophisticated counterparts in academia. Books with telling titles, such as *The Breakdown of the State in Lebanon* (El Khazen 2000) or *Coexistence in Wartime Lebanon: Decline of a State and Rise of a Nation* (Hanf 1993), and reports by peacemaking organizations[47] effectively disseminate the image of state failure premised on the Hobbesian metaphor.[48]

In this chapter, I argue for a radically different approach toward the powerful image of Lebanon's failing Leviathan. To begin with, I consider the latter to be a category open for empirical scrutiny, rather than a normative and irrefutable principle that is inherently linked to successful state building, democratization, prosperity, and development. In doing this, however, I do not wish to offer yet another epistemological critique of the category on the basis of whether or not it is analytically useful. This deconstructive approach, quite popular among anthropologists and critical theorists alike, should not be underestimated, not least due to the relatively meager theoretical reflection on the widespread uses (and abuses) of the notion of

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[45] Theorists in both opposing coalitions largely agree on this notion of the troubled state. See, for example, *Fragile States* by Ali Fayyad (2008). A sociology professor at the Lebanese University, Fayyad is affiliated with Hizbollah and an elected member of Parliament.

[46] The literature both on Hobbes (1651) and on Leviathan is gargantuan. See, for example, Carmichael (1990), Schmitt (2008), Shapin and Schaffer (1985), and State (1987). However, there is no consensus on the Hobbesian position regarding 'human nature' (van Krieken 2002). Nevertheless, Hobbes's influence on modern theorizing about state, war, and peace is immense (Trainor 1985). Note the importance of the so-called Hobbesian problem of order for much of the Parsonian structuralist sociology (Parsons 1937; see also Alexander 1988; van Krieken 2002).

[47] For example, one section of a report for the Working Group on Development and Peace by Kraft et al. (2008) is titled "A Country without a State?"

[48] See De Cauter (2011) for an even more graphic adaptation of the Hobbesian nightmarish prediction that is based solely on a weeklong visit to Lebanon.

state failure. Still, I do not wish to engage in a battle over definitions of essential concepts. In fact, I am more interested in the ways in which particular concepts are utilized, as well as the often unintended and unexplored effects of their use in contemporary debates. Paraphrasing Appadurai (1986b), it is basically the 'social life' of the concept that I am concerned with, because, as with things and products, the circulation of concepts produces value that has to be accounted for politically. In the words of Marilyn Strathern (1992, xvii), "I wish to demonstrate how ideas behave."

In approaching the category of 'failed state' as an empirical problem, I wish to challenge the commonly accepted idea that it is merely an effort to address issues of state sovereignty. Although I do not deny this altogether, instead I seek to explore ethnographically how the concept works and how it produces unexpected effects that are highly political and relevant. I do this through the perspective of a relatively recent development, namely, the rise and institutional expansion of the professionalized field of peace expertise in Lebanon in particular and in the world at large after the end of the Cold War. As I argued in the introduction, I regard this field as strategically crucial, inasmuch as it has become integral to the business of crafting definitions, circulating tools and theories, and applying a number of practices in the name of peace in a variety of ways in different regions. In the process, peace experts have assumed a vital role in efforts to redefine and reconfigure other essential notions as well, such as civil society, democracy, development, and, last but not least, peace. Although, I consider the domain of peace expertise to be characterized by a unique combination of a universalistic moral stance and a technical understanding of peace, I do not mean to say that it is in any way monolithic. For example, in the direct aftermath of the May Events, the diversity of the practical performance among experts was striking. Mediators, mainly Qatari or other foreign, high-ranking diplomats, organized so-called Track-1 negotiations between rival party leaderships within guarded, luxurious spaces outside Lebanon. Peacemaking NGOs arranged trauma-healing workshops for the civil society. Crisis researchers in peace think tanks had to strike a delicate balance as local informants, who would able to supply international media with information, and as crisis experts, who would gather their own data for upcoming 'crisis

reports'—brief but elaborate analyses of the situation, which would include recommendations to all political stakeholders involved.

During my fieldwork, I often noted the special conceptual affinity between Leviathan's image and peace experts' ideas and practices. I contend that this sort of expertise constitutes an important topic for social scientific investigation, not only because it is a relatively novel and unexplored domain within a much older and well-researched field of expertise in post-colonial state building,[49] but also—and mainly—because the field's legitimacy is premised on an emerging moral-technical rereading of Hobbesian conceptions of order that largely remains unquestioned.

In more general terms, I argue for a methodological shift of attention that would place expertise at the center of anthropological inquiry.[50] Such a conceptual move facilitates a radically different perspective on the debate over the uses and abuses of the notion of the failed state. It allows for a number of inquiries into the productivity of the concept as an expert category and renders another set of questions possible: How is the concept of the failed state imagined and produced within expert practices and discourses? What kind of knowledge does such a reproduction make use of, and what kinds of knowledge does it render irrelevant? Which are the crucial institutional sites for the proliferation of a particular understanding of state failure? What are the practical and discursive effects of the dissemination of the image of state failure? What other questions, approaches, and ideas are silenced or hidden behind the overwhelming conceptual shadow of the powerful metaphor of the failing Leviathan?

In what follows, I take up these questions separately. First, I begin with a brief discussion on the anthropological response to the Hobbesian conundrum in Lebanon and elsewhere. In this

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[49] This does not mean to say that there are no critical appraisals of the field, regarding either its universalist claims or the UN peacekeeping operations. See introduction.

[50] In my approach, I am building heavily on the strands of a recently blossoming domain of critical work on experts both within and outside of anthropology (see introduction). Needless to say, much of this field is drawing inspiration from the work of post-colonial and post-structuralist authors such as Edward Said (1978) and Michel Foucault (1980).

section, I present some helpful insights to my own approach, which could be situated at the interstices of the anthropologies of state and expertise. Second, I sketch a typology of the major discursive practices applied by peace and other crisis experts in Lebanon in their efforts to define the problem and to intervene accordingly. I argue that the practices of isolation, pathologization, sectarianization, and alienation are crucial for any imagining of the failed Leviathan in Lebanon. In the next section, I tell the stories of two peace experts—Robert, a crisis analyst for a think tank, and Samir, an employee of a peacebuilding NGO. Both accounts show that experts are often well-aware of the complexities of the situation on the ground and are therefore wary of oversimplifications. Nevertheless, institutional constraints, the drive toward universal compatibility, and, not least, a familiar sense of self-evidence lead them back to Hobbesian patterns. This means that they often have to ignore their critical capacities and adapt to the necessities inherent in their professional role as experts. I consider this to be a distinctive element of the mode of subjectivation of experts and thus a major thrust of my overall argument. In the conclusion, I briefly explore the productivity of the concept of the failed state regarding fields and ideas other than those that are usually analyzed in connection with it, such as sovereignty, for example. Here, I suggest that these effects of state failure need more study.

Encountering the Leviathan: An Anthropology of State Failure

While much of the anthropological literature on Lebanon seems to subscribe to the imaginary of state failure, it would be somewhat unfair to claim that this is done in an explicitly Hobbesian spirit. Rather, these accounts are often preoccupied with questioning Western paradigms and binaries. At the same time, they seek to provide broader and more inclusive understandings of the concept of the state. For example, Lebanese anthropologist Suad Joseph (2000, 4) considers the state through the lenses of "civic myths" (citing Smith 1997). Thus, according to the "hidden hegemonic civic myth … of extended kinship," the state is "weak, unreliable, and unable to afford citizens protection from social, economic, and even political insecurities" (Joseph 2000:

109). To this effect, Joseph argues, "[t]he state has been decentered from critical social action. To the degree that the state has been seen as having agency, it is often negative. The state has existed for the extraction of resources. Most citizens have felt they have to guard against the state for its arbitrary and corrupt uses by others, and kinship has been seen as their primary protection against the state" (ibid.).

Michael Johnson (2001) makes a somewhat similar, albeit altogether more essentialist, argument about the inability of the state to 'penetrate' society. Such accounts present the state in Lebanon as unable or unwilling to 'reach out' to the needs and demands of its citizens, who often experience the state through a quasi-schizophrenic, concurrent sense of weakness and menace (Obeid 2010). Such accounts do produce a much differentiated picture by relying on citizens' images of state failure. But is that the entire picture? Is this as far as an anthropology of the state may go?

In general, anthropology seems decisively to have overcome a long-standing reluctance to engage in theoretical debates over the question of the state (cf. Gupta and Sharma 2006). A burgeoning body of literature has addressed such diverse aspects as processes of state formation (Alonso 1994; L'Estoile, Neiburg, and Sigaud 2006), nationalism (Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983), law (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006; Latour 2009; Merry 1992), bureaucracy (Herzfeld 1992), state terror (Aretxaga 2003; Feldman 2003; Sluka 2000), citizenship (Joseph 2000; Nguyen 2005; Ong 1999), democracy (Paley 2002), and rituals of statehood (Bowie 1997). Other studies have analyzed the nation-state in the era of globalization (Durrenberger 2001; Eriksen 2003; Inda and Rosaldo 2008), corporate power (Kapferer 2005), and the rise of the corporate state (Kapferer and Bertelsen 2009). Beyond these more general themes, there has been particular anthropological focus on issues of state margins (Das and Poole 2004) and state borders (Alvarez 1995).

Anthropology, along with critical political science, has also contributed to theoretical debates on the state as a conceptual or empirical object. Gupta and Sharma (2006) refer to a handful of

scholars—Abrams (1988), Corrigan and Sayek (1985), Mitchell (1991b), Nugent (1998), Radcliffe-Brown (1940), and Trouillot (2003)—who have convincingly questioned the state's presumed fixity as a category of analysis. Gupta and Sharma (2006: 8) caution against any assumptions of the state "as a given—a distinct, fixed and unitary entity that defines the terrain in which other institutions function." They suggest a research agenda that is primarily preoccupied with the study of the state as a "cultural construct" (ibid.: 173; see also Steinmetz 1999) in order to understand both the particular modalities of state construction (through the study of everyday practices and representations) and the effects that this construction has on politics (such as the operation of power in society). In addressing the constructed domination of the state, other critics have inquired into the qualities of the state that facilitate its appearance as a "message of domination" (Abrams 1988, 82), a 'fantasy' (Navaro-Yashin 2002), or a 'magical' entity (Coronil 1997; Taussig 1997).

I build extensively on these insights. Yet instead of asking how the *potency* of the state is constructed, I pose an inverted question: how is the *failure* of the state constructed? What would a study of failure as a cultural construct look like? At the center of my explorations lie two main assumptions: first, that the image of state failure can be the product of cultural work and construction, and, second, that this image can have multiple productive effects on various levels. These assumptions may also lay the cornerstone for the development of an anthropology of state failure. Less concerned with normative studies of state incompleteness, its critical task would be to question the assumptions behind presumed failures.

Over the past two decades, the term 'failed state' has penetrated both academic and policy-making agendas. The Failed States Index, published annually since 2005 by the US think tank Fund for Peace and the magazine *Foreign Policy*, has become a significant tool in "the making and carrying out of public policy and is frequently referred to in the making of decisions by the US State Department and USAID as to how aid is allocated" (Manjikian 2008, 336). Since the mid-1990s, the surge in books published on the topic continues unabated (see fig. 2.1).

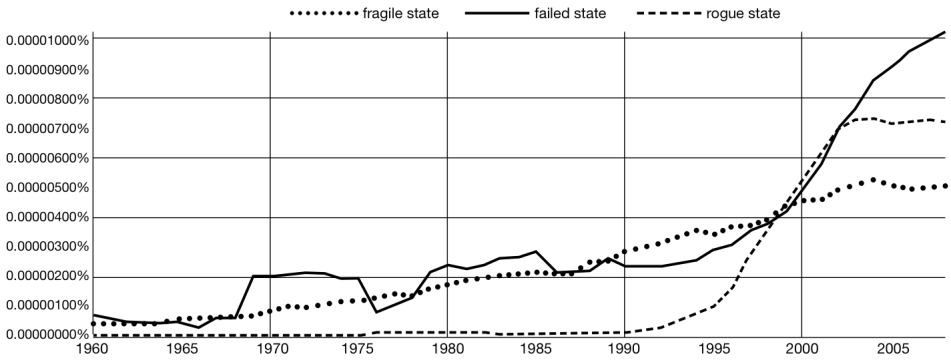

Figure 2.1 Number of Publications on 'Failed', 'Fragile', and 'Rogue' States

Source: Google N-Gram

Notably, critics of the concept have emerged, pointing out its normative and Eurocentric roots (Boas and Jennings 2005; Gutiérrez Sanin 2010; Hameiri 2007). Some reject the state-centric bias toward 'regime security' and propose instead the precept of 'human security' against which state failure should be measured (Boas and Jennings 2005; UNDP-AHDR 2009). These critics draw primarily on the observation that, within a state, some actors could have reasons to cultivate a weak state. Thus, what matters is not *which* states are failing but rather *for whom* and *how* (Boas and Jennings 2005). A second strand of critics argues for a 'hybrid' type of statehood, as opposed to clear-cut Weberian ideal types (Boege et al. 2008). Every individual state formation is somewhat unique, they say, and hybrid state forms are equally legitimate historical products. These critical approaches suggest that the category 'failed state' has itself failed. Yet instead of simply denouncing it, why not first ask for whom the category is failing and in what way? What would be the productive effects of failure in this case?

It could be argued that the first task of such an epistemological enterprise would be a theoretical engagement with the contours of the Hobbesian conceptions as they find their application in contemporary academic and policy discourses on failed states. Marshall Sahlins (2008) has recently taken up this challenge, albeit not that explicitly. He embarks on a critical interrogation of the "culture-nature antithesis" (ibid., 14)—less directly with reference to

Hobbes, and rather in the ways that these concepts have helped formulate contemporary political doctrines. He traces the overwhelming power of the Leviathan's image in the manner that this binary is operated as a political tool. Thus, the realm of the state is often identified as the realm of *nomos,* which includes the cultural efforts of humanity to counter the antithetical forces within it, namely, inherently violent natural dispositions (*physis*). Sahlins claims that this "totalized metaphysics of order," which supposes an opposition between culture and nature, is "a specifically Western metaphysics" (ibid., 1–2). Crucially, this metaphysics is omnipresent in Western politics, but it can be also found in other fields, such as the organization of the universe and in therapeutic concepts of the human body (ibid.).[51]

Coming from the perspective of an anthropology of peace and war, Paul Richards (2004a) demonstrates how a Hobbesian reading of the culture-nature binary permeates much of the ideological foundations of contemporary debates on war. In particular, he laments the "decontextualized ways that serve to set up a dichotomy between war as some kind of inherent 'bad' (the world ruled by instincts and base desire), and peace as an ideal 'good' (the world ruled by principle and law). With this kind of approach, war itself becomes the enemy—indeed, the common enemy of human kind" (ibid., 3). To be sure, conceptual dualisms and ontological binaries are central to modernist thought (Mitchell 1990; van Krieken 2002). Yet the Hobbesian dichotomy of order has arguably played a constitutive role for much of the dualisms that have followed. As with Gupta and Sharma (2006), however, I do not seek to decry the false ideology behind the thought; rather, I aim to draw attention to the political processes and the discursive techniques that make the Hobbesian concept authoritative.

The Failing Leviathan: A Typology of Practices

In what follows, I attempt to develop a typology of some distinct discursive practices that are

[51] Strathern (1980) goes beyond the idea that the binary is the only flaw in this train of thought.

often applied by peace experts in their efforts to depict a failing Leviathan. In this analysis, I am more interested in pointing out what I see as the essential material and ideological aspects of the proliferation and dissemination of those practices. I am also concerned with the ways in which they work as rhetorical devices within particular contexts.

Isolation: The Divided World of the Middle East

Some three weeks after the May Events, *TIME* magazine's front page featured the following title: "Special Report: The Divided World of the Middle East." One half of the page showed, against a white background, the skyline of a modern Gulf capital, reminiscent of Manhattan on a sunny day. On the other half, a handful of bullets were displayed against a black and gray background of fire, smoke, and turmoil (see fig. 2.2).

Figure 2.2 Lebanon's May Events Depicted on the Cover of TIME

Source: Author's archive

The caption underneath the bullets read "While Lebanon burns, a new economy and society takes shape in the Gulf." Indeed, such a Manichaean juxtaposition between a 'burning' Lebanon and a 'blossoming' Gulf is a recurrent topic in Western reporting on the Middle East. Yet, as Said (1978) showed, the plausibility of Orientalist images is possible only after a considerable amount

of work has been done that involves a series of selective entanglements and disentanglements. These practices often result in the depiction of an object as isolated from its immediate social or historical environment. After having been submitted to this crucial decontextualization, the object at hand is placed on a wide open path to idealization and exoticization.

Lebanon's alleged state failure is no exception to such a dynamic. The practice of isolating the country from highly relevant economic, political, and historical contexts when analyzing its 'failure' is widespread among different kinds of experts in Lebanon. One way that this is achieved is by neglecting or downplaying the crucial connection between the booming Gulf economies and the unstable Lebanese political environment. Another way is by omitting the latter's direct relationship to the conflict over Palestine.

At the level of the economy, it is truly hard to deny the degree of penetration of Gulf-based capital into vital domains of the Lebanese economy, such as real estate, tourism, and banking.[52] According to a high-level World Bank official in Lebanon, there is a crucial connection between real estate speculation and political instability.[53] In fact, the growing influence of the Gulf states over Lebanon is manifested on many levels. For example, it is quite telling that after the May Events, the emir and president of Qatar successfully mediated between the conflicting Lebanese parties. More generally, though, Lebanon's economy is highly internationalized, with foreign investments, emigrant remittances, development aid, illicit trade, and other forms of 'shadows of war' (Nordstrom 2004) playing essential roles that remain largely unexplored at the scholarly and journalistic levels. In the face of such complexity, it is analytically faulty to depict the country as an isolated island of chaos in an otherwise blossoming neighborhood.[54]

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[52] In Lebanon, Gulf investors have reportedly invested a total of $3.5 billion in local real estate, constituting 40 percent of total realty investments. The large players include Abu Dhabi Investment House, Dubai's Habtoor Group, and Dubai Islamic Bank, as well as private Saudi investors (Hertog 2007, 61; see also Eid and Paua 2002).

[53] Off-the-record communication in 2009 from a high-ranking official at the World Bank office in Beirut.

[54] Significantly, banking, another main sector of the Lebanese economy, continued unabated throughout the May Events. As Saad Andary, the deputy general manager of Bank of Beirut and the Arab Countries, aptly noted: "Most of our branches in Beirut, which was [the] scene of two days of clashes, opened their doors in the morning and closed in the afternoon." He

Still, the discursive practice of isolating Lebanon from its wider historical-political context can best be understood with reference to the ways in which some peace experts handle Lebanon's relationship to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A striking case at hand is the declared policy of a global peacebuilding think tank—which is headquartered in Washington, DC, and maintains a local branch in Beirut—not to include this major conflict in its analyses of the region. This policy, an unwritten law, seems inconceivable to at least one of the female Arab researchers at the center:

> There is bias in everything … [including] the selection of the topic … As an example, [the think tank, henceforth TT] has made a choice not to conduct studies about the Arab-Israeli conflict! It's one domain that TT has chosen not to interfere in, and the reason why is that they want to spare themselves—you know, the Israel lobby in America is very strong—they just want to spare themselves the hassle of being called anti-Israel. This is something that we found very strange—that is, having a center in the Middle East and turning a blind eye to the Arab-Israeli conflict, which we believe, as Arab researchers, as locals here, to be the main problem in the Middle East. Rather than addressing the Arab-Israeli conflict, TT papers just focus, if you have noticed, on any work on Palestine and Palestinian policy. But there is no work on Israel's policy, for example. OK, if you don't want to tackle the Arab-Israeli conflict and you are trying to tackle internal issues, you might as well focus on Israeli policies or Israeli domestic policies. But that is not being done. We have been referring this issue, and there hasn't been any response. I think they haven't made up their minds yet on what to do about that issue. All of a sudden, Israel is very much there, and yet it is not there in TT's papers. They focus on Iran, for example—they are doing a program on Iran. But how is it that Iran is part of the Middle East, while Israel is not? The Arab-Israeli conflict 'doesn't exist',

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added that the majority of the bank's employees reported to work and that the banks were conducting "business as usual" (Habib 2008).

as Israel 'doesn't exist' as well. This is why I say that knowledge is not neutral."[55]

To be sure, there is an ongoing, lively scholarly debate on the influence of what some call the 'internal' and 'external' parameters of the Lebanese conflict. Whether it is possible to draw a rigid line between the two without running the risk of oversimplification is debatable (cf. Yacoubian 2009).

Isolation as a common expert practice is not unique to Lebanon. James Ferguson (1990) has shown how development experts tend to depict Lesotho in isolation from its wider regional environment, as well as historically decontextualized. Having said that, it is important to highlight the particular ways in which such a practice takes place in each different context. Thus, the image of state failure in Lebanon is further re-enforced by those expert discursive practices that tend to disentangle the Lebanese conflict, not only from the Gulf economies and societies, but also from the historical and everyday realities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Pathologization: Conflict-Affected Countries

The unit for Emerging and Conflict Related Issues (ECRI) is a recently established UN agency within ESCWA (Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia), the regional arm of the United Nations in Western Asia.[56] It was established "in response to political tensions and conflicts facing the region, the last of which was the July 2006 War in Lebanon" (UN-ESCWA 2011). According to ECRI's own description, the new unit aims to "reduce the impact of conflict and tensions on socio-economic and political development in Western Asia, as well as to promote the concept of development under crisis conditions" (ibid.). ECRI's mandate extends to

[55] Interview with researcher in Beirut, March 2007. To my knowledge, the think tank organized a single event concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict: the Israeli assault on Gaza in January 2008. "They were dragged into this," one of the think tank's young researchers told me.

[56] ESCWA is one of five regional commissions of the UN's ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council). The other four are as follows: (1) the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), (2) the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), (3) the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and (4) the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

five conflict-affected countries: Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, Sudan, and Yemen. Since its inception in 2006, ECRI has decidedly focused on 'weak state' institutions. These are considered to be both the "root causes" (ibid.) and the consequence of most of the challenges that the region faces. The argument goes that the affected countries, already weakened by conflict and political tensions, now face numerous challenges, such as poor or malfunctioning economies, insecurity and lawlessness, human rights violations, low social cohesion, and the lack of essential social services. In turn, all this fuels yet more conflict and political tensions. These countries are also 'suffering' from a good governance 'deficit'.[57] This circular idea—that weak state institutions produce conflicts that, in turn, weaken state institutions—features in many ECRI publications, as well as in the mind of at least one among its senior staff.[58]

The notion of conflict-affected countries is crucial here. It designates those nations that are thought to be undergoing similar pathologies despite having very dissimilar features and differing violent trajectories. For example, the conflicts in Sudan and Yemen are strongly characterized by secessionist struggles; Lebanon's conflict is directly linked to the neighboring struggle over Palestine, as well as the problematic aftermath of a 15-year-long civil war; and the violence in Iraq and in Palestine is at least partly attributable to the contingencies of foreign military occupations. Lumping these rather incompatible cases together under the label 'conflict-affected countries' makes sense only when a circular, abstract, and ahistorical notion of conflict is applied and when radically different socio-historical situations are classified solely according to symptoms (weak state institutions, instability, good governance deficit, etc.). Arguably, symptomatology, as the privileged analytical frame, provides a shortcut to decontextualized discussions on violence, underdevelopment, and other widely circulated notions that strongly allude to failure. Further, a conceptual correlation between the discursive

[57] Medical metaphors on the conflict are common in many expert publications on Lebanon. For example, in the report of a US-based peace institute, Lebanon appears to have "deficiencies," to "suffer challenges," to be "weakened" and "unable to cope" (Yacoubian 2009). As Talal Asad (2010b) shows, medical metaphors (e.g., al-Qaeda as a 'cancer') have been widely applied by both the Bush and Obama administrations in their rhetoric of the 'war on terror'.

[58] Interview with ECRI staff member, Beirut, March 2008.

practices of pathologization and isolation can be noted here, inasmuch as a symptoms-based conflict analysis appears perhaps more credible and useful only after other analytical frames (historical, regional, etc.) have been rendered irrelevant.

Sectarianization: Communal Tensions

In 2009, ECRI published a pilot study seeking to shed light "on the causes of and challenges posed by communal tensions" (UN-ESCWA 2009).[59] It was hoped that an analysis of youth perceptions on those issues would "initiate a debate among researchers and policymakers" and "serve policymakers and peacebuilding specialists to extrapolate operational strategies or programmes" (ibid.: 2). The authors stated that the study did not attempt to address "all aspects of the root causes of communal tension" (ibid.: 5), but instead to focus "on the perception of youth on the issues of reproduction of identity, intercommunal relations and the political system" (ibid.). The study was further premised on the assumption that "communal tensions … are the root causes of conflict" (ibid.: iii). In order to collect those perceptions, the facilitators selected 113 young Lebanese men and women, aged 18–25, and placed them into fifteen "focus group discussions" (ibid.: 4).[60] The participants were selected from "the four main communities in Lebanon: Sunnis, Christians, Shiites, and Druzes … from all parts of the country, aiming at fair urban-rural representation" (ibid.). The organizers paid special attention to the fair representation of women and men, as well as of low- and middle-income levels (see table 2.1). The study adds explicitly that participants' profiles were checked so as "to make sure that each met the required criteria" (ibid.).

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[59] The UN study, entitled "Unpacking the Dynamics of Communal Tensions: A Focus Group Analysis of Perceptions among Youth in Lebanon," was co-sponsored by the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung in Berlin. See http://www.escwa.un.org/information/publications/edit/upload/ecri-09-5.pdf.

[60] Discussion topics included the "nature of clientelism and the political system" and the "dynamics of intercommunal relations and animosity" (UN-ESCWA 2009: 4). The discussions were moderated by "trained facilitators" from the Focus Group Research Centre at the Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies. The focus groups also included in-depth discussions with people who had "extensive empirical experience in communal tensions and conflict resolution … Two focus groups were conducted with (i) mayors and municipal members of Shiyah and Ain El Remmaneh, identified as hot zones in civil conflicts and (ii) civil society activists who work on related projects" (ibid.).

Profile		Number of focus groups
Sex	Male	55
	Female	58
Communities	Sunni	4
	Shiite	4
	Maronites	3
	Druze	2
	Mixed Christians	2
Income Level	Middle	9
	Low	6
Region	Mount Lebanon	3
	North	5
	Bekaa	2
	Beirut and Suburbs	5

Table 2.1 Summary of Criteria for Participation in Survey

Source: http://www.escwa.un.org/information /publications/edit/upload/ecri-09-5.pdf

In general, the study makes extensive use of a highly technical language and aesthetic of objectivity (tables, diagrams, selection criteria, fair representation). Still, the description of the details of the discussion groups reveals the strategic role that the concept 'homogeneous youth groups' played in their formation: "Significantly, *homogeneous youth groups* conducted the discussions. The selection of the members of each group was deliberate, that is, each participant was selected from a *single community* in order to avoid such biases as social complacency or political correctness that might emerge from *mixing the groups*. Putting together *homogeneous groups* helped the participants feel comfortable in discussing views and perceptions of *their own community and of other communities*" (UN-ESCWA 2009: 5; emphasis added).

Thus, despite the fact that a variety of criteria (sex, communities, income level, region) guided the participants' selection in general, the discussion groups were formed solely on the basis of belonging to a single community. The idea of mixing the groups, that is, bringing people from different communities into a common discussion team, was perceived as something that would taint the study's purity and produce undesired biases, such as social complacency or political correctness. The perceived benefit of making the participants feel at ease thus led to the decision to form homogeneous groups. This practice and the rhetoric of cultural homogenization demonstrates that the frame of 'communal tensions' was present in the organizers' perspective rather than that of the participants. The methodological, conceptual, and political problems

arising from such perceptions are countless. For one thing, the possibility that the participants may identify the notion of homogeneity very differently is a priori excluded. Equally excluded is the otherwise frequent occurrence in Lebanon of people who cannot be categorized into homogeneous groups (e.g., when each parent stems from a different community). Notoriously, inclusion is always also exclusion. Vested with the aesthetic of objectivity, but deeply flawed in their empirical assumptions, such 'studies' may lead to self-fulfilling prophecies at best, if not to hurtful experiences of peer pressure to 'homogenize' at worst.

This case of evidently constructed communal homogeneity is, although excessive, not exceptional. A close analysis of the conceptual frame of ESCWA's study reveals that its ideological roots lie in the academic discourse of 'ethnic conflict', which was popularized during the early 1990s.[61] It did not take long to permeate the way that higher officials at the UN would perceive the post–Cold War world. In *An Agenda for Peace*, then Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1992) declared that the cohesion of modern states is often "threatened by brutal ethnic, religious, social, cultural or linguistic strife." The concept 'ethnic conflict' was largely elaborated and disseminated—at least initially—within the much larger discursive framework that was characterized by what one could call the 'culturalization of violence'. Arguably, also part of this discourse, albeit much more extremist and problematic, was the thesis on the 'clash of civilizations', produced by neo-Orientalist historians and political scientists, such as Bernard Lewis (1990) and Samuel Huntington (1998). Tellingly, the study at hand quotes one of Huntington's staunchest supporters, who contends that conflicts must be seen as situations in which "culture is pitted against culture, people against people, *tribe against tribe*" (UN-ESCWA 2009: 3, citing Barber 1992; emphasis added).

This practice, which I call 'sectarianization', tends to identify sectarian identities as a single

[61] In a section entitled "Communal Tensions: Multilateral and Regional Perspectives," the ECRI study traces back the discourse on communal tensions within the United Nations to "a landmark report by the Secretary-General entitled Agenda for Peace" (UN-ESCWA 2009, 7; see also Boutros-Ghali 1992). For a discussion on how the term 'ethnic conflict' dominated diverse problematizations of socio-political violence in Lebanon during the 1990s, see Chapter One.

frame of identification when there are none or many more than one. It works through a series of selective and circular assumptions, at the end of which stands what the study perceives as state failure. Failure is then defined as the result of the inability of different pre-modern, sectarian groups to work together toward the establishment of a modern, secular state.[62]

Alienation: Non-state Actors

On 13 March 2008, only two months before the May Events, a panel discussion, entitled "The Mughniyeh assassination and the Hizbollah Scholarship," took place in one of Beirut's luxurious hotels.[63] The event was hosted by two Beirut-based institutions: Conflicts Forum, a think tank with offices in Beirut, London, and Washington, and MideastWire, an Internet-based Arabic news translation agency. The speakers were Lebanese scholars and Western journalists, believed to be 'experts' on Hizbollah. The facilitators aimed at tackling the issue of scholarly production on the structure of political parties and its role in Lebanese and Middle Eastern politics in general. The audience was composed of foreign journalists, diplomats, development experts, and Lebanese researchers and activists. During the Q&A section, participants in the audience intensively questioned both the label 'Hizbollah scholarship' and the assumptions behind it. They objected to the tendency in both academic and journalistic circles to carve out a distinct domain of knowledge production that focuses exclusively on Hizbollah. Crucially, they regarded this domain as being situated in a gray zone between academia and intelligence and thus raised questions about the intentions and the rationale behind it.

The existence of a 'Hizbollah scholarship' seems to be an undeniable fact. Especially after the party's successful military campaign against Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon, the

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[62] For an excellent repudiation of the idea that sectarianism in Lebanon is a pre-modern trait, see Makdisi (2000). Like Makdisi, I do not seek to say that there are no sectarian identifications in Lebanon. I am rather interested in looking into the ways that these existing tendencies become certainties, fixations, and self-fulfilling prophecies within expert discourses and practices.

[63] Imad Mughniyeh, a high-ranking member of Hizbollah, was assassinated in Damascus three months before the May Events. Some analysts link these two events, claiming that Mughniyeh's killing in Syria "strongly aggravated the party's reflexes of paranoia and suspicion" (Bahout 2008).

production of books, articles, and reports on Hizbollah took off exponentially.[64] Needless to say, there is hardly any consensus among these scholars about how best to label Hizbollah. The list, ranging from the most dismissive to the most embracing, includes designations such as 'terrorist entity', 'extremist group', 'state within a state', 'non-state actor', 'Shiite movement', and 'resistance group'. Most experts do not wish to have their neutrality questioned by either side and thus prefer middle-of-the-road categories such as 'state within a state' and, more often, 'non-state actor'.[65] Keeping in mind that the terms 'terrorism' and 'resistance' are both highly politicized and thus contested, it can be assumed that the use of the latter constitutes an effort to pose the problem in a rather objective way. However, this does not mean that negative connotations are excluded, since, according to at least some scholars, the distance between the two concepts 'non-state armed groups' and 'terrorism' is rather short.[66]

Indeed, there is a growing body of studies on non-state actors that stretches from more academically oriented political science analyses to policy-oriented conflict and terrorism research. A large part of 'Hizbollah scholarship' could be said to belong to this strand. To be sure, the term 'non-state actors' means different things to different people (Clapham 2009). That being said, it is hard not to notice two major features, that is, the negative marker and the state-centrism. The entities at hand are defined according to their position vis-à-vis the state, which is a priori considered to be antithetical, if not hostile, to it. It can be argued that the term 'non-state actor' has become popular because it is both abstract enough to include a wide variety of heterogeneous political formations but also concrete enough to signify an undeniable threat that the same formations pose to the state. As opposed to the unmarked prototype of the state, it

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[64] For a small selection of these publications, see Alagha (2006), Azani (2008), Haddad (2006), Harik (2005), Jaber (1997), Nasr (2006), Norton (2009), and Saad-Ghorayeb (2002). During my Beirut fieldwork, I encountered numerous scholars, mostly foreign, who came to Lebanon to 'study Hizbollah'.

[65] For an overview of how these labels are typically used by political experts, see "The Lebanon Crisis," 22 May, http://www.bitterlemons-international.org/previous.php?opt=1&id=228.

[66] Here is a common depiction of expert domains as presented by the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*: a visiting scholar is described as "an expert in insurgency and terrorism and the evolution of non-state armed groups." See http://carnegieendowment.org/ 2011/05/03/media-call-after-bin-laden/4q0l (accessed 17 April 2011).

constitutes a negatively marked term, an inherently inconceivable threat to the established order and an abnormal development—in other words, a true Hobbesian nightmare.

More generally, in contemporary expert analyses on terrorism and 'global insurgency networks', the notion of the non-state actor delineates the model pattern of threat.[67] In the Lebanese context, the use of the term within many strands of 'Hizbollah scholarship' is often punctuated with presumptions of threat and disloyalty. Hizbollah is perceived to pose an existential menace to the Lebanese state due to the party's unwillingness to conform to the state monopoly over organized means of violence. Instead, it follows its own 'parochial' interests and thus threatens the coherence and cohesion of the state. It can be argued that this discursive practice, which I propose calling 'alienation', is an extreme version of the previously discussed practice—that of sectarianization. Through the use of presumably neutral and descriptive terms, such as non-state actor, images of 'internal aliens' are constructed. These alien bodies are believed to have no loyalty to the official state and thus constitute an essential threat to all of its citizens. As "matter out of place," in Mary Douglas's (1966: 41) sense, Hizbollah produces ambivalence that can be both a threat (terrorism) for some and a promise (civil society) for others. Yet both forms remain defined solely in relation to the state. The practice equals a rhetorical device of 'Othering', through which particular citizens or parties are depicted not only as isolated from the whole, but often as radically different and dissimilar—and thus as dangerous to the rest. Arguably, the strong sense of danger and the contours of unquestioned state-centrism that such notions tend to reproduce could explain a scholarly tendency to understand the existence of non-state groups as causes, rather than symptoms, of state failure (cf. Boas and Jennings 2005).

[67] Here one must note the radically different use of the same term in expert discussions on civil society, market, and community governance. In studies such as these, non-state actors are usually perceived as positive alternatives to a corrupt and patronizing state. I thank the editors of *Social Analysis* for pointing out this interesting contrast.

State Failure, State Talk, and the Switching Expert

Samir

"It's a game, a way of testing each other's limits," Samir, a Lebanese man in his mid-twenties who was working for a peace NGO, told me about similar but much less bloody instances of violence that had taken place before the May Events. "They all agree that they will not go too far," he added. I wondered if he would have considered that they had gone too far in May. Samir once again proved able both to downplay the incidents and to offer an alternative and perceptive analysis of the appeasing aspects of that sort of violence in the Lebanese context: "Now that Hizbollah has used its weapons, everybody is relieved. At least we know how far their threats correspond to the reality." This comment on the 'relieving' effects that this form of violence had came as no surprise to me. Not only was it similar to the opinions that many Lebanese held at that time, it was also characteristic of Samir's overall political ideas.

During my fieldwork, I became quite familiar with Samir's thoughts and views, as he did with mine. Throughout the months leading up to May 2008, we spent long nights discussing Lebanese and international politics. Samir's analyses of the performative uses of violence reminded me of highly sophisticated anthropological accounts, to the extent that I often urged him to study anthropology whenever he should decide to go back to school. He had an eye for the symbolic and the ritualized elements in those exchanges of violence. Very rarely did he regard them as a mere means to a single end, such as the control of resources or the building of the state, for example. Rather, he saw them as embedded in a complex grid of social relations, performative actions, and ritualized exchanges. For instance, during one of our discussions, Samir spoke to me with great excitement about the insights that he had gained from his work with 'focus groups', made up from participants of different (mainly religious) communities in Lebanon. This work was part of a reconciliation program run by an international NGO. His task was to coordinate the discussion and to collect participants' views on different topics of interest, such as citizenship, reconciliation, development, and so forth. He described at length how

fascinated he was by the ways that the leaders of these communities would often exchange threats and small acts of violence as vehicles of an intimate sort of communication, as a way to interact based on many elements of playfulness and absurdity. In fact, Samir's views reminded me strongly of Gilsenan's (1996) ethnography on the feuding landlords of rural Lebanon. Gilsenan describes how irony, subversive commentary, and honor-based claims constitute essential political tools in the hands of powerful elites but are also elements available to non-elites in their efforts to criticize the excessive use of power by the former (ibid.). Yet Samir had never read Gilsenan.

After the May Events, Samir was featured as a commentator for a leftist newspaper in the German-speaking part of Switzerland.[68] As I was to discover soon afterwards, a piece that he had written about the recent events lacked what I have often experienced as his eloquent analysis. An otherwise informed perspective seemed to have given way to a rather normative discourse on state failure: "What happened showed that there was maybe no state to start with. The Lebanese who put down their weapons in 1990 to begin a new phase of the country have not learned anything. The state is just another club in Beirut, a place for the warlords to meet and play cards … The choice is between the corrupt proxy politicians and radical Islamic movements. Unfortunately, neither of these two builds a state!"[69] In the piece, Samir attributed May's violence solely to the absence of a "strong state." His self-evident recourse to Hobbes struck me, engendering a strong feeling of estrangement. How could I make sense of the radical difference between Samir's creative opinions in our discussions and the reductive reproduction of a Hobbesian account on failure in the newspaper? Was it due to the fact that the journalistic genre does not allow much space for more than the 'basics'? Do format restrictions lead to

[68] Samir was offered this opportunity by a Swiss friend, whom he had met through his work as a peacemaker. As an insider, Samir contributed a few pieces on Lebanon.

[69] This piece was published in German, and the translation into English is mine. Due to my decision to keep Samir's identity undisclosed, I do not provide the source. Thus, although it is a public document, I treat the article as part of my fieldwork archive.

relatively simplistic explanations of complex issues? Or was it due to Samir's ability to differentiate between talking to an anthropologist and publishing a piece as a local analyst for a foreign newspaper? Could the difference be interpreted as an intervention by the newspaper's editors?

After having read his articles, I asked Samir whether the Swiss editors had imposed any guidelines on his writing. This is what he told me: "Well, they let me express my thoughts, but they also need a substantial part of *political information* included" (emphasis added). Was it this need to provide some 'political information' that could explain the difference? Are there particular kinds of languages and approaches that appear to be more political than others—that is, more compatible for the pages of a foreign press?

Robert

"After and during the May Events, I had to give around 80 interviews," Robert told me in excitement. A Swiss-born and –educated sociologist, Robert was the 'analyst on the ground' in Beirut for a global crisis think tank that is headquartered in Brussels. During that May, he was contacted by all sorts of media outlets from all over the world and by foreign embassies in Lebanon. He was asked to give his expert opinion on the situation, and this is a good part of Robert's job description. However, his essential task is data collection for his own research, which then flows into the writing of crisis reports. Such reports constitute the major product of crisis experts today. Occupying a middle ground between academic and journalistic analysis, they usually include the 'facts', an interpretation of the events, and some recommendations to the parties involved (local actors, global powers, etc.).

Robert's crisis report on the May Events—the fastest he had ever written, as he told me—came out only one week later. Entitled *Lebanon: Hizbollah's Weapons Turn Inward*, it was mostly an analysis of the party's stance before and (principally) after the May Events. Encapsulated in the title, the report's main argument was that the party's decision to turn its weapons 'inward' (as opposed to 'outward', i.e., toward Israel) will severely injure its self-

cultivated image as a "national resistance" and will inflame "sectarian tensions." The commentary on Hizbollah continued as follows: "Outside its own constituency, it is seen more than ever as a Shiite militia brutally defending its parochial interests rather than those of a self-proclaimed national resistance. The blatantly confessional aspect of the struggle has deepened the sectarian divide, something the Shiite movement long sought to avoid (International Crisis Group 2008, 1). In typical fashion, a number of recommendations for all sides were given in order to achieve a resolution of the crisis. The report was written in the language of party politics: parochial interests, political strategies, and rational calculations constituted the 'data'. In this sense, the piece most probably fulfilled the readers' expectations.

However, the story behind the report's style is somewhat more complex. It can be said to begin in Egypt, where Robert spent almost a decade before coming to Lebanon. His research on religion and the market in Egypt shaped his general approach to Islamist movements. As he told me, the differences between academic research and political expertise were clear to him:

> Robert: Basically, at that time … I was refusing any idea of compromising research with political interest. *So the idea of expertise I refused completely*. I wasn't so much political science oriented. [I was] focused on social issues, anthropology. The thesis, published as a book now, was about how militant experience can be marketized. I wasn't focusing on the movements' strategies, etc. *I was never—and still [am] not—an expert on the Islamic groups. I don't want to be.*
>
> NK: Why?
>
> Robert: *Because I don't consider them as an object.* My research was about the process of Islamicization, sometimes studying tendencies inside the Muslim brothers, but not about the Muslim brothers as a militant group. [My book] is about the process of demobilization, but the real project is not about religion and politics—rather, it is about religion and the market, both inside the Muslim brothers but also outside … [I]t was such a subject on which I was

working when the switch happened. (Interview, Beirut, 2008; emphasis added)[70]

Robert was adamant in rejecting the idea of being an expert on Islamic groups. He preferred rather to explore "empirical questions," as he would call them: the marketization of religion, the Islamicization of consumption, and the demobilization of political Islam. So what forced Robert to change his approach? He explains: "I used to live in Egypt 12 years before I came here … My aim at that time was to reach the public academic sector in France … I was classified, I was short-listed, you know the process of classification: you have two, three people at the end, and then you take one. I was classified once as number 5, twice as number 2, and finally I came back from Egypt. [I spent] one year looking for a job in Switzerland, and I ended up at the [name of the think tank] in Beirut." When Robert decided to apply for the position in the think tank, many things about the job disturbed him: the idea of expertise sounded unattractive, the salary was not perfect, and the writing style was alienating. On the other hand, he would be able to support his newly expanded family until he could find something else. Upon taking up the job, he was admonished by an older colleague: "Now that you are with us, you have to forget academic style and start thinking politically." Robert took the advice to heart and began producing reports that he considers to be 'dry' but at least 'political'.

The Political

But just what is the 'political'? My story shows how both Samir and Robert, two meticulous analysts of ritualized violence and marketized Islam, respectively, experienced the political as a state-centric and rather static discourse within what they perceived to be expectations bestowed

[70] Robert was exceptionally open to me about his work. Upon invitation, I often visited him at home or joined him in meetings with colleagues in Beirut. He could have done so because, at the time of my research, he had already submitted his resignation and was preparing to take up another job in Switzerland. (The person who followed Robert in the post, a social scientist from France, refused to give me any interviews.) On the other hand, Robert kept telling me how fascinated he was by my research, not least because he could express his own reflections as a trained social scientist and as a 'colleague' (in the sense of "paraethnography"; see George and Holmes 2005).

upon them by their colleagues and audiences. In the new understanding of the political, the discourse on state failure becomes the chief—if not the sole—frame of reference. This says a great deal about the compatibility of the Hobbesian metaphor within contemporary expert discourses on peace, crisis, violence, and state building.[71]

A last point of clarification is necessary here. Although I suggest that the shifts in the ways that experts (like Samir and Robert) adjust or contextualize their knowledge must be accounted for, I do not mean to construct a rigid division between an academic and an 'expert' perspective, as Ferguson (1990) proposes. The institutional entanglements and the discursive borrowings are too many to support the idea of two distinctively separate domains of knowledge.

An alternative reading of Samir's and Robert's 'switching' experiences might follow Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's (1986, 21) discussion about the "two kinds of science—nomad, war machine science and royal, State science." These are two distinct and almost antithetical domains of knowledge: the war machine is projected into an "abstract knowledge," while the State science "doubles the State apparatus" (ibid., 19). Their tools are radically different (i.e., theorems versus problems), and, inevitably, tensions arise. As a result, nomad science is "'barred,' inhibited or banned by the demands and conditions of State science" (ibid.). Through a continuous appropriation, the latter often imposes its "form of sovereignty on the inventions of nomad science" (ibid.). In the end, State science often prevails, and the perspective put forward is thus static, "subjected to a central black hole divesting it of its heuristic and ambulatory capacities" (ibid., 22). In Lebanon, as elsewhere, this 'black hole' often takes the form of a particular discourse on state failure, thus divesting it of expert critical capacities.

[71] The phenomenon of 'switching' among experts in development, peacemaking, and other fields constituted one of the major findings of my research. Needless to say, there were different ways to deal with discrepancies and failure. Cynicism was definitely one of them. Some United Nations stuff, disenchanted by the organization and given the restriction to publish without permission, they would often use pseudonyms for the dissemination of their critical views.

Conclusion: The Productive Effects of Failure

In this chapter, I have argued that a particular use of the discourse of state failure plays an essential role in contemporary conceptions of Lebanese politics. Lebanon's failed state is depicted as a real risk, not only to its own citizens and the neighboring states,[72] but also to the world system at large. Further, the failed state discourse puts into place particular geographies of threat and responsibility: it tends to depict the world as a construction site populated by numerous Leviathans in urgent need of repair.[73] At the same time, failed states are conceived as rather rare cases within an otherwise functioning system of robust and healthy states. The binary image that depicts healthy states against the 'Wild Rest' (Kosmatopoulos 2011), albeit translated into technical terms, constitutes a powerful political instrument that effectively distributes moral responsibilities, rewrites historical trajectories, and reinscribes power relations.

On another level, the generic label 'failed state' contributes to the construction of an atmosphere of constant crisis in Lebanon and beyond. This particular version of a crisis imaginary provides the opportunity to analyze and reframe given socio-historical developments in different terms. Hence, the May Events are perceived to be both the result and the cause of state failure; small-scale wars or military aggressions by antagonistic neighbors (such as Israel's 2006 war on Lebanon) are often translated into humanitarian emergencies;[74] and complex socio-historical situations, local antagonisms, and global power games are reinterpreted as opportunities that "transnational terrorist and guerrilla groups" may use to turn weak states into "havens" (Atzili 2010, 757). In sum, such perceptions not only introduce a vision of history and geography through the frames of failure, deficit, and lack, but also—and more crucially—present contemporary world affairs within an increasingly bellicose atmosphere. Hence,

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[72] Compare this notion of the failed state with the expert notion of 'spillover effects'.

[73] As a Berlin-based peace expert once told me: "There are so many construction sites in this world."

[74] For an insightful analysis of the use of the social imaginary of 'emergency' in modernity, see Calhoun (2004). For Israel's 2006 war on Lebanon, see Achcar and Warschawski (2007) and Hovsepian (2007).

omnipresent crisis is translated into a critical battle against constantly emerging threats.

Finally, as the stories of Samir and Robert clearly demonstrate, the notion of the failed state crucially revitalizes—both in epistemological and in political terms—what Wittgenstein would call 'the grammar' of the state. In this, they seem to be in line with much of contemporary social science. Michel Callon and Bruno Latour (1981) have convincingly argued that modern sociology is preoccupied with constructing Leviathans. "Experts of society," they say, seek to "construct a unity, define a group, attribute an identity, a will or a project; each time they explain what is happening, the sociologist, sovereign and author—as Hobbes used the term—add to the struggling Leviathans new identities, definitions and wills" (ibid., 298). Famously, as the sole embodiment of a secular order, the state has provided much of the epistemological basis for modern social science—and hence the contemporary Leviathans. Even when perceived as failing, they nevertheless succeed in impeding the disenchantment of the state.

Chapter Three The Power to Pacify

A Topology of Practices beyond the Framework of Crisis and Response

Should we turn the expression around, then,
and say that politics is war pursued by other means?
Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Vol. I, p. 93

Introduction

In the previous two chapters, I offered a critical appraisal of those discursive practices through which different kinds of expertise (social and political scientists, peace and development experts) produce, disseminate and make use of the particular notions of *ethnic conflict,* and of *failed state* in Lebanon, as an essential part of their interventionist discourse and practice. In the first chapter, I highlighted how a highly culturalized reading of the Civil War in Lebanon assumed *a posteriori* dominance within academic and other expert narratives. In the second chapter, I used the so-called 'May Events' as my ethnographic entry point into an illustration of how a carefully cultivated image of Lebanon's *failing Leviathan* unites both experts and public figures from all sides of the political spectrum. In both cases, I suggested that we must approach the peculiar consensus over these essentialized perceptions of state, culture and violence not as givens, but as *empirical problems,* which may highlight the unexpected, but highly political, effects of all too commonly accepted notions.

In this chapter, I return once again to the 'May Events', but for opposing reasons. Here, I am not concerned with the unintended effects of unquestioned expert labels that are crafted to best depict the failure of the state, or the sectarianization of the conflict in Lebanon. Rather, I look at the flip side of the phenomenon, and, namely, at those practices that peace experts – among others – design in order to address – in a *productive way* – what they see as symptoms or causes of socio-political violence. Having said that, I must add that I do not regard peace expertise as something one might call – following Gilles Deleuze – part of *reactive efforts* to re-establish order, guarantee stability or facilitate

the transition to normalcy after crises. I propose that this kind of expertise not be perceived as a mere *response* to emergent crises or failures, that is as a multiple mix of efforts designed to stop, repress or minimize the symptoms or the causes of conflicts. I also suggest that this kind of expertise be viewed beyond the filter of a sovereign power that must be re-installed after it has been shaken.

Rather, drawing on the work of scholars such as Michel Foucault (1995), Nikolas Rose (Rose and Miller 1992), Timothy Mitchell (2002a), Stephen Collier (2009) and others, I prefer to analyze (peace) expertise as the sum of specific 'political technologies' that are organically embedded in more general and productive ways of exercising modern power. In brief, this is an inquiry into the different ways of organizing the *power to pacify* today. I thus explore how the emergence of peace expertise has set off a new configuration of power that produces new forms of (practical and scientific) knowledge, forms new types of (political and moral) subjects, and invites new kinds of (technical and political) expertise. Yet, instead of making any claims about the coherence of this new kind of power, I seek, rather, to show how it is constituted through the deployment of an array of diverse technologies and logics on a rather topical level, which nevertheless has substantial global aspects. The aim of approaching the emergence of peace expertise through the analytical framework of technologies of power, or of 'technopolitics' (Mitchell 2002), is promising because it directs us to look at crucial sites of intersection, such as that between popularized, quasi-scientific ideas of 'rational choice theory' in peacemaking, technicalized forms of 'dialogue', and new expert types, such as the mediator (s. below). Further, a 'topological' analysis of power (Collier 2009) cautions us against any presumption of systematicity and saturation. Rather, it introduces the idea of heterogeneous and diverse 'patterns of correlation' among different forms of the power to pacify.

My choice of a productive understanding of this kind of power, as well as of a rejection of the framework of *response to crisis,* also tactitly questions conventional views on the ways in which *crisis* may differ from *normalcy* as a socio-political situation. As proponents of the recently rediscovered 'political theology' argue, this division lies at the heart of modern politics, since it constitutes the nature of contemporary sovereignty. These accounts tend to inherently link *crisis* with *sovereignty* when they contend, for example, that the origin of sovereign power is the "state of exception"

(Hansen and Stepputat 2006). Yet, an analysis of peace expert practices in the historico-political context of contemporary Lebanon, from the framework of the uses as *political technologies* (Foucault 1995, 24), stongly suggests a radical departure from the distinction between *crisis* and *normalcy*, as well as a more nuanced approach to the relationship between *crisis* and *sovereign power*. In the former case, it stresses not only continuity, but also the need to regard the constant construction of the divide as the necessary conceptual and moral ground upon which the politics of (peace) expertise may develop. In the latter case, it offers a more complicated picture, including different post-colonial configurations of the power to pacify, which co-exist and correlate with more or less explicit forms of sovereign power.

In what follows, I provide an ethnographic account of a host of peace expert practices on the basis of their understanding as modern technologies of power within a topological grid. In doing so, I ask the following sets of questions: First, how do particular peacemaking practices function from a techno-political point of view? What kinds of political rationalities and subjectivities do they produce? What kinds of expert types and institutional forms do they enable? Second, what different formations of power do these practices manifest? How can we make sense of them within a wider historico-political context of the modern power to pacify in Lebanon and beyond?

I begin my endeavor by setting the theoretical framework, in which I situate my suggestion to go beyond familiar and conventional divisions. Here, I discuss some important notes on the nature of modern power by post-structuralist scholars. Building on these insights, I propose a topology of different kinds of power to pacify as I see them unfolding within the context of the post-May Events in Lebanon. The second section offers the bulk of my empirical material, presented as what one could call an ethnography and an explicit questioning of the 'transition to normalcy' at the same time. It is an analytical description of the distinct practices that different kinds of experts, both in Lebanon and abroad, applied in the direct aftermath of the May Events. The description is systematized as follows: First, at the diplomatic level, Qatari and other Arab diplomats facilitated what many glorified as a successful *peace summit* in Qatar's capital of Doha, in which the leaders of the major Lebanese political parties finally agreed on a plan for reconciliation. Second, the United Nations Secretary-

General released semi-official *statements,* in which he first 'condemned' bellicose actions and, a week later, 'welcomed' peacemaking efforts. Third, peace NGOs organized a series of *workshops* in Beirut's UNESCO Palace in an effort to facilitate civil society's 'response to crisis'. Finally, global think tanks specializing in crisis and peace published – through their local branches in Beirut – hastily written, albeit widely circulated, *reports*, in which various speculations about the reasons behind what they saw as Hezbollah's 'Coup d' État' were suggested.

The ethnographic description lays out the empirical ground for an examination of the identified practices from the perspective of the main questions raised above. In particular, I explore how certain arrangements of diverse elements occur and thus enable those practices to spread. Athough I am more concerned with the ways in which these assemblages appear in their final form, I suggest that they must be understood as particular and distinct forms of, what I propose to call, the modern power to pacify. For example, the peace summit is characteristic of this type of modern power, which one could label the *Hobbesian peace*. This kind of power is linked to a set of very particular combinations of the idea of *rationality*, the method of *dialogue* and the role of the *mediator,* which, taken altogether, reconfigure, in crucial ways, the notion of modern sovereighty. It is instrumental in crafting sovereignty qua peacemaking. Second, the official statements by the UN Secretary-General reflect the moral-political regime of the *Holocaustian peace,* as I suggest to call it. Although not from scratch, this new global order was institutionalized in the aftermath of World War II, in which the 'international community' not only sought to assume the 'responsibility to protect' various threatened civilian populations around the globe from falling victim to genocide, but also took it upon itself to be able to identify the facts that constitute an official and acknowledged definition of 'genocide'. Third, in conflict resolution workshops, disciplinary methods are implemented in order to train and re-educate the 'civil society' in the moral values of civility and the technical skills of citizenship. I propose to call this type of power *disciplinary peace,* because it is grounded on the logic of discipline and correction. Fourth, in peace and crisis think tank reports, diverse 'rogue' entities and 'non-state actors', designated as threats to peace and security, are effectively placed under the academic jurisdiction of expertise on relevant issues (terrorism, state-building, security). The experts' main

mission is to produce and disseminate knowledge on these unruly Others. This type of peace I call *actuarial peace*, since it is premised on quasi-academic forms of surveillance of the Other.

The conclusion merely attempts to concentrate and systematize the new types of knowledge, the new kinds of subjects and the new forms of expertise that are deployed within the power to pacify today. In sum, I suggest that these developments reflect a radically different era of peace expertise, which is largely premised on disciplinary and actuarial logics that promote correction and surveillance. In essence, the new practices effectively disentangle peacemaking from previous crucial conceptual and moral links to issues of social justice, political reform and popular participation, and instead orient it towards an expert-based regime of power.

Beyond Crisis: Technologies of the Power to Pacify

In the previous chapters, we saw how academic and expert problematizations of socio-political violence, civil war and statebuilding in Lebanon revolved around the proliferated labels of *ethnic conflict* and *failed state*. In light of these developments, theoretical discussions and practical interventions towards peace and peacemaking took place within two common discursive frameworks. The first was the framework of *crisis*: the conventional story goes that wars and conflicts erupt when underlying structural weaknesses or ethnic tensions reach a stage of untenability, which, if not adequately addressed, may accumulate into *crisis*. In these moments, politics threaten to be continued by other means, as Clausewitz taught us. Thus, interventions by peace experts (among others) are either oriented towards acute resolutions, or directed towards accurate predictions of crises. The second framework was that of *response*: Expertise on peace and conflict is needed as responsive action to cases of state failure, instances of ethnic conflict, and other forms of civil and uncivil violence. Either in pre-emptive or active form, this form of expertise is developed in order to counter existing dangers to civilian lives, and threats to peace and stability, etc.

Arguably, the taken-for-granted nature of these two discursive frameworks produced the image of peace experts as external actors to a dynamic and unpredictable global phenomenon, namely, the proliferation of socio-political violence and instability. In fact, a major distinction was put in place, which carried a series of epistemological, moral and political implications. The distinction posed on one hand the domain of *warmaking* with its distinct tools, practices, actors, moralities and rationalities. On the other hand, the domain of *peacemaking* with its own arsenal of moral principles, technical methods, actors and practices, etc., that has been developed and organized as response to the former. However, keeping these two domains resolutely separate – in antithetical conceptual and moral forms resembling disease and remedy respectively – not only impeded effective and reflective critiques of contemporary peacemaking, it also disabled crucial ways of better understanding contemporary violence, war and warmaking, since peace experts are heavily involved in the crucial business of defining what is peace and what is war today. This chapter seeks to contest the grounds upon which such frameworks were put into place.

Most of the argument laid forth here builds upon Michel Foucault's seminal work on power. Seeking to "escape from the system of Law-and-Sovereign which has captivated political thought for such a long time" (1990, 97), Foucault offered another perspective on the mechanisms of power, namely its analysis as a *relation of force*:

> "By 'power' I do not mean 'Power' as a group of institutions and mechanisms that ensure the subservience of the citizens of a given state. (...) The analysis, made in terms of power, must not assume that the sovereignty of the state, the form of the law, or the over-all unity of a domination are given at the outset; Rather, there are only terminal forms power takes. It seems to me that power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization" (Ibid., 92).

This kind of analysis escapes the framework of power as this substance that resides only in the official institutions and higher echelons of sovereignty. It also goes beyond the issue of the

cardinal legitimacy of power. It asks pertinent questions regarding the latter's local applications, technical efficacy and effects of domination. Although it does build heavily on the work of the Frankfurter School and the ontological relation between truth and power in modernity, Foucault insisted that we should not take as a 'whole the rationalization of society or of culture, but to analyze such a process in several fields, each with reference to a fundamental experience: madness, illness, death, crime, sexuality and so on' (Foucault 1982, 210). Such an analysis of power from the point of view of its internal rationality in diverse fields is highly suggestive because it reveals the particular ways in which a society thinks about (and acts upon) those issues that are designated as social problems: 'For example, to find out what our society means by sanity, perhaps we should investigate what is happening in the field of insanity. And what we mean by legality in the field of illegality.' (ibid., 211).

Taking my cue from these insights, I suggest to regard the field of 'peace' within its own systematicity, and not as the product of a response to actual and existing problems of war, violence, crisis, etc. Paraphrasing Foucault, it could then be that such a perspective on the field of peace could highlight what contemporary societies mean by *War.* This approach can hopefully question common assumptions on peace by reorienting our analytical attention towards peacemaking. Therefore, instead of thinking of peacemaking within too commonly accepted frameworks of response and crisis, I suggest to perceive it as a field of power in its own right, within its own systematicity, equipped with its own sets of logics and political technologies. In brief, I suggets to regard peacemaking as that general domain of expert practices that produces, organizes, disseminates and reconfigures the power to pacify today.

How can we thus analyze this kind of power? This is the main question that I am posing here. For my purposes, I approach this inquiry with the help of a twin methodological apparatus; namely, through what one could call the *technologies* and the *topologies* of the power to pacify. The former is a well-known Foucauldian notion, which is widely understood as those forces that may appear in, or enter a given society, a given country, a given field and then take up and redeploy pre-existing diverse practical, technical, epistemological elements, create new and reassemble all

within a specific tactic (Foucault 2007, 8-9). I illustrate, for example, how *discipline,* as a technology of power, entered the field of peacemaking in the form of the 'conflict resolution workshop', and thus reconfigured particular elements within civil society in Lebanon, producing a new moral-technical arrangement that I suggest to call *disciplinary peace.*

The notion of the 'topology' of power is a neologism proposed by anthropologist Stephen Collier. In an effort to revisit Foucault's analysis of political government, Collier makes the claim that an important modification in both method and diagnostic style occurred between the introduction by Foucault of his concept of 'biopolitics' in 1976, and his revisiting in 1979. He suggests that in the latter lectures, a more nuanced and less epochal approach was put forward. Although the focus remained on the ways in which a technology of power may provide guiding norms and an orienting telos, it was stressed that it does not saturate all power relations: "Rather, it suggests a configurational principle that determines how heterogeneous elements – techniques, institutional arrangements, material forms *and* other technologies of power – are taken up and recombined. This configuration of elements, and the principle through which they are related to each other, is what Foucault calls a 'system of correlation'. It would be preferable, perhaps, to call it a topology of power" (Collier 2009, 89).[75]

A topological analysis of power explores those patterns of correlation, in which heterogeneous elements – techniques, material forms, institutional structures and technologies of power – are configured, as well as the redeployments through which these patterns are transformed (ibid.78). More importantly, though, it allows for an analysis of different logics, of different forms of power and the possible relations among them. As Collier notes, Foucault in his 'Security, Territory, Population' analyzes different kinds of power (discipline, sovereignty, security) not in linear succession vis-a-vis a given historical frame, but within a complex frame of interfaces and

[75] Collier is here influenced by scholars who introduced the mathematical concept of topology into the social sciences, such as Gilles Deleuze and Michel Serres: "Here I have in mind a rough analogy to topology as a branch of mathematics concerned not exlusively with the geometrical properties of objects but with how spaces are organized, with the connectivity properties that arise from certain arrangements of elements, and with their transformations." (Collier 2009, 80)

correlations among different forms of power (Collier 2011). He argues that this is symptomatic of a "move away from the epochal shift (...) toward a finer set of distinctions among formations of power that are shaped in response to particular problems and situations" (ibid.).

Building heavily on this attempt to refine the Foucauldian perspective on power, I have three aims in this present chapter. First, I show how an analysis of peace practices demonstrates a web of institutionalized, well-organized and permanent attitudes vis-a-vis particular problematizations of violence and state failure, rather than *ad hoc* responses to crisis and emergency. Second, I argue that these peace practices must be understood as reconfigured and correlated political technologies within a complex field of power in its own right. Third, I situate these different logics of power in their relation to each other (topology), as well as within the socio.historical context of their development.

After Violence: The Normalcy of Crisis

"After the rout of pro-US *March 14* militias at the hands of the Hezbollah-led opposition forces in Beirut and Shouf mountains last week, a Qatari-led Arab League delegation sent to Beirut on 14 May succeeded in brokering a truce. The seven-point agreement reached includes the immediate resumption of national dialogue in Doha – with the main aim of finally forming a national unity government, electing a president by consensus, and agreeing on the details of an electoral law – and the pledge not to use force to settle political disputes.

The airport, port and main border crossing with Syria, as well as schools and shops, were promptly re-opened as militias on both sides removed roadblocks and hid their weapons. With the army deployed throughout key areas, Lebanese citizens once again resumed their everyday activities under the more familiar conditions of a devastated environment, massive traffic jams, unregulated construction and urban planning, electricity and water shortages, state-sponsored theft or abuse of public lands and resources, rising poverty, inflation and unemployment, and one

of the worst budget deficits per capita in the world. The illusion of normalcy, in other words, has returned for the time being but the real question is: for how long?" (Makdissi 2008)

After the street violence ended, the "illusion of normalcy" returned, says Lebanese political scientist Kareem Makdissi. The crisis was over. *Or was it*? When the army redeployed, the Lebanese could finally exit their houses and move freely within a more familiar setting of so-called normalcy, characterized by mounting *structural violence* (rising poverty, inflation, unemployment), *environmental destruction* (traffic jams, unregulated construction and urban planning), *financial instability* (worst budget deficits per capita in the world), *economic and political inequality* (state-sponsored theft or abuse of public lands and resources), as well as *shortages* in electricity, food and water. On the face of these conditions, Makdissi rejects the idea of *return to normalcy* altogether, because 'normal' here simply means the unabated continuation of various injustices and malfunctions. Normal is the everyday misery produced by inequality, instability and structural violence.

In fact, most of the conventional accounts were preoccupied with the uninterrupted continutity of the Hobbesian sovereign state and with the crisis that was defined as the eruption of street violence. It is maybe due to this focus that they were unable or unwilling to highlight an important fact that was meant to address some of the structural inequality that Makdissi refers to. Some days before May 7, the General Labor Confederation (GLC) attempted to stage a nation-wide general strike demanding salary rises and the introduction of a minimum wage. The strike, planned for Wednesday the 7th of May, turned violent long before the eruption of what pundits rushed to call 'sectarian violence'.[76] It is not clear whether the labor strike was thought of as a

[76] In the labor protest, roads were blocked and protests turned violent, reulting in at least 10 people, including two soldiers, injured. Before Wednesday, however, GLC Chief Ghassan Ghosn called off the strike, blaming the government for not taking the necessary security measures to guarantee the safety of protesters. The Interior Ministry issued a statement on Wednesday, denying Ghosn's allegations. "Ghosn's allegations cannot hide the fact that the planned strike was not meant to be one to protest the government economic policies," the ministry statement said. "Had the strike been serious, it would not have turned violent. Ghosn cannot hide the real aims behind the strike that he called for." (Abdallah 2008a). The International Crisis Group's report (s. below) refers also to the labor strike, albeit very briefly, and within

means of political pressure directed towards the government regarding the latest decisions on Hezbollah, as some government figures (and crisis experts) rushed to claim. What is certain, however, is that the strike did not find any place within widespread conceptions of *crisis*, let alone within expert plans towards possible resolution.[77]

Figure 3.1. "Practice Peace". Shop window in Jemmayzeh Beirut

Photo by author, Winter 2008

In Doha, the Emir hosts the 'Lebanese National Dialogue'

Only hours after the eruption of violence in the Lebanese streets, Qatar, the new 'diplomatic powerhouse' of the region (Daragahi 2008), undertook the initiative to mediate between the feuding parties in Lebanon (Abdallah 2008b).[78] Initially, it joined in Beirut a delegation of the Arab League to prepare the ground for further talks in the Qatari capital. Upon the Lebanese rulers' arrival in the small Gulf emirate, Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani read an

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the framework of a manipulated move by the opposition to gain infulence in the political game. These were the 'real stakes', the report concludes.

[77] Another reading of the May violence could even reverse the relationship between crisis and normalcy. According to this perspective, the three days of violence brought about an end to the 18-month long period of deadlock, which included constant instances of violence and a permanent sit-in in Beirut's downtown against what protesters saw as the government's shortcomings during the Israeli assault in July 2006.

[78] On the role of Qatar as regional peace broker and regional player in general, see Eakin (2011).

opening statement, welcoming them and vowing to protect Lebanon's future by preserving its unity. Sheikh Hamad said that Qatar was looking forward to being a place where Lebanese leaders could meet for fruitful talks. "We hope that consensus is reached so we can avoid dangerous consequences," he said before adjourning the opening ceremony and announcing that the first round of talks would be held at 10:30 a.m. the following day.[79]

The Doha summit was premised on a so-called 'plan of reconciliation', the major points of which were the following: 1. Things would return to the state they were in prior to the events which occurred after May 5. This should include: welcoming the government's decision to accept the army command's proposal regarding the two decisions related to the airport security apparatus and Hezbollah's telecommunications network; The immediate ending of all armed presence and the complete withdrawal of militants from the streets, and opening all roads as well as the Rafik Hariri International Airport and the Beirut seaport (…) 2. Agreeing on resuming national dialogue between the different leaders and working on building trust between all parties according to the following agenda: The formation of a national unity government; The drafting of a new electoral law for the 2009 elections. (…) 3. After declaring this agreement and implementing its first item, dialogue would start in Doha on May 16 under the auspices of the Arab League and will not end before reaching a settlement. [80]

In Lebanon, Qatar was thanked by 'all Lebanese' in government-sponsored billboards across the country (see fig. 3.3).

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[79] Not everyone was supportive of these efforts, however. Commenting on the Qatar-mediated talks to solve the current crisis, US State Department Spokesman Sean McCormack said that bickering Lebanese politicians will not resolve their differences "in the course of a week." Hizbullah "is going to be a continuing issue for Lebanese democrats to deal with over the course of time," he said. (The Daily Star 2008a).

[80] The remaining points are the following: 4. All parties would commit to not using arms or violence in a bid to achieve political gains. 5. Starting a dialogue on enhancing the authority of the Lebanese state on all Lebanese territory and organizing its relations with the country's different political parties in a way that guarantees the security of the state and the people. Such dialogue will be launched in Doha and will be resumed under the auspices of the newly elected president and the Arab League.

6. All political leaders would commit to halting mutual accusations of treason and end political and sectarian incitement immediately.

Figure 3.2. Lebanese political leaders congratulate each other in Doha

Source: Internet

Figure 3.3 'We all say: Thank you Qatar'

Photo by author, Beirut May 2008

The Doha summit in 2008 could be easily described as one more episode in a long series of the political drama called 'The Lebanese National Dialogue' (*Al Hewar al Watani al Lubnani*). Indeed, the practice of 'dialogue' has been exercised by Lebanese rulers since the establishment of the Republic in 1943, if not much earlier as a significant part of the sectarian politics under a crumbling Ottoman regime (Makdisi 2000). As with previous efforts, the Doha summit was celebrated as the return to normalcy and as a successful effort towards crisis resolution.

Yet, the historical memory prompted many Lebanese to see in Doha a temporary ceasefire that would only lay the groundwork for the next clash. Instead of crisis resolution, Doha was

perceived as an instance of crisis preparation. Iskandar Mansour, Lebanese intellectual and political activist, suggested another reading of the Doha summit:

> "My reservations are primarily due to the fact that I consider that this agreement is the detonator for the next explosion. (...) Such an agreement will not help fortify the inner front as it only helps regional and international forces to sneak in behind various sects, which exposes the unity of the country, which is already weak, to more dire threats. (...) This agreement is the same as the national pact in 1943 and the Al-Ta'if accord and it will have the same effect. So let us apologise in advance to our children and grandchildren (...) The Lebanese sectarian princes exploited the fact that the Lebanese had had enough and wanted a truce even for a year or a month or a week or even for an hour so that they could bury their dead and take care of their elderly and calm their children. So the leaders answered the Qatari prince's invitation to reach an agreement that can be called at best a sedative..... They stayed up all night adding and subtracting: Sunni minus Shi'i plus Christian divided by Druze times Orthodox minus Armenian. The result: 'same as before'.[81]

The critique that regards the result of the Doha summit as a 'sedative', and the 'same as before', rests on a historical perspective that regards this and previous agreements (such as the unwritten *National Pact* of 1943 and the *Tai'f Agreement* in 1990 for example) as mere products of the exploitation on behalf of the Lebanese rulers of the people's fears of crisis. The argument asserts that leaders exploit the crisis they themselves tend to create. Thus, instead of ending the violence, such agreements only serve to perpetuate a system that is based on repetitive cycles of violence.

But other critics took to question the very notion of 'dialogue' too. More than anything, they debunked the idea of a 'national dialogue' as an *ad hoc* response to crisis. They expressed doubts regarding both the widespread image of contentious leaders who were finally convinced to talk to each other, as well as the alleged inclusive character of the dialogue process. In fact, they saw

[81] "I object" by Iskandar Mansour, Lebanese writer and intellectual (fieldnotes)

both elements as complementary, in which the elite leaders are constantly in dialogue with each other, while they effectively exclude everyone else from it. Paul Salem, the director of the Beirut office of the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* makes the point clearly: "Lots of dialogue exists among the oligarchy, but it doesn't mean that the country is in dialogue; national dialogue is not national in that sense" (Salem Interview, Beirut). In a very similar vein, Fawwaz Trabulsi, professor at the American University of Beirut, lamented this kind of dialogue as hypocritical and exclusionist: "Politics in Lebanon has a function to suppress talk about economics and social movements and social issues. I don't think dialogue means anything (…) it has a lot of hypocrisy (…) Five-six people are running the country and that's it (…) if anything, they are talking to each other" (Trabulsi interview, Beirut).

The point about the constant and strong links between allegedly antagonistic leaders is brought home effectively by Julien Ottinger, a Swiss mediation expert, who was born in Beirut and whose father was for decades the NZZ's (Neue Zürcher Zeitung) foreign correspondent for the Middle East. Julien went to school in pre-Civil War Beirut. As children of a well-off expat, he and his sisters attended private, foreign schools. He went to the 'Salician boys school' and his sisters to the 'French' school. He clearly recalls his classmates to be the heirs of Lebanon's sectarian leaders. It was class, and not religion or sect that brought these people together, says Julien:

> "All the political classes of Beirut were together and they all went to the same school. So there was not confessionalism for them… No, no probably not! There were people who were praying Friday morning, but that's all!! All these people know each other perfectly well. They pretend they don't know each other but they do know each other very well. They pretend they don't recognize the other, 'he changed so much' he would say. If you talk to Nabih Berry or Jumblatt,[82] that's what he is going to say 'eh he is not the same one, I don't recognize him any more!!!'" (Julien Hottinger, Interview Lausanne).

[82] Nabih Berry and Walid Jumblatt are the leaders of the Amal party and the Progressive Socialist Party respectively. At the time of the interview, they were members of opposing coalitions.

So, if 'dialogue' is less an ad hoc response to emerging crisis, but rather a constant feature in Lebanese elite politics, if 'crisis' is less a problem to be resolved in peace summits hosted in luxurious hotels, but rather a condition of possibility to be exarcebated and exploited by powerful elites against their own people and if the 'leaders' are less entangled in contentious politics, but rather constantly indulging in a symphony of consent about the continuation of their rule, how does the 'transition to normalcy', the resolution of crisis, the assumption of dialogue, in short the *peace of the sovereign rulers* emerges as a distinct array of peacemaking? What are the heterogeneous elements whose contingent assemblage creates the image of what one could call the *Hobbesian peace* in Lebanon?

The Summit: Hobbesian Peace and the Making of Sovereignty

The *summit* is the symbolic space at the apex of sovereignty. Conventional accounts tend to perceive summits, such as the one in Doha, as the place in which agreements are sealed and political deals among state leaders or rivalling politicians are concluded. As a result, accounts measure the amount of success of peace summits according to their direct outcome, namely, the conclusion of an agreement and the satisfaction of the parties involved. In my analysis of the summit I suggest a different path. Instead of regarding it as a means to end a war or a conflict, I propose to analyze it as a political technology, i.e., as a *techno-political ritual* that produces and re-enforces particular notions of sovereignty. In other words, I suggest that the summit is not merely the result of a rational decision taken by contentious statesmen to come together under the auspices (pressure or reward) of an external mediator. The summit instead must be accounted for as a technology in its own right within certain epistemological and political webs of power.

Such an approach could contribute to a shifting of our understanding of sovereignty away from the conventional frameworks of legality and of crisis, which dominate current discussions. For example, the theme of sovereignty has been recently rediscovered in anthropology, mostly

inspired by the work of Giorgio Agamben (1998). In an important review of this literature, anthropologists Hansen and Stepputat urge us to analyze the 'new configurations of sovereign power' in postcolonial settings (2006, 295). The authors acknowledge the 'particularly tenuous' nature of sovereignty in these contexts. The need for a 'deeper (...) understanding of the nature of modern sovereignty' is stressed.

I fully acknowledge this need to explore the contours of contemporary sovereignty in postcolonial settings. In fact, my analysis of the *summit* as a political technology of peacemaking looks at the ways through which both ritualized, 'pre-modern' elements and 'modern' types of authority are deployed, side-by-side, in order to re-establish and re-define sovereignty as the *final outcome* of successful peacemaking practices. In brief, I look at sovereignty, not as the institutional coronation, but as the contingent product of summitry. In doing so, I sort out those elements that underpin the practice of summitry, such as the following: diverse forms of scientific knowledge produced about it - the so-called science of 'summitry' and more reent work on 'negotiation', technicalized concepts of 'dialogue', the role of the figure of the mediator, as well as minor investments in space and language, such as the isolation of the individuals from their socio-historical context and their alleged immersion into secrecy.[83] I argue that such arrangements tend to depict summits as Habermasian "ideal speech situations", in which the individuals involved engage in strategic communication based on the effective exercise of their rational capacities. Hence, the "national dialogue" is portrayed as the perfect form of a 'rational dialogue', performed by state leaders, who incorporate the ideal of the sovereignty of the body politic.

I. The Science of Summitry popularized: 'Getting to Yes'

[83] For example, most of these talks are premised on an initial agreement that postulates that all participants may express themselves freely, while at the same time it guarantees that none of the opinions expressed may be quoted out of the meetings. In the diplomatic language this rule is known as the "Chatham Rule". It has been labeled after the influential government-linked British think tank Chatham House.

During the Cold War, the so-called 'science of summitry' was a favorite theme of political scientists and International Relations theorists (Dunn 1996; Galtung 1964; Rostow 1986; Thompson and Modelski 1977).[84] The Cold War was, after all, the 'era of epic summitry' (Lawrence 2008), during which the rivalry of the two Super Powers had to be played out both in proxy battlefields and in peace summits. As a result, the academic literature on 'summitry' was mostly preoccupied with relevant questions about the possible ways for political leaders to achieve the 'most impressive results', about the influence of statesmens' personal rapport and power of persuasion in the summits, about the role of diplomats and other experts in the negotiations and about the effective implementation of agreements (ibid.). Needless to say, the exclusive nature of the summit as a practice pertinent to the higher echelons of power (leaders, diplomats and experts) certainly had an impact on the corresponding literature, whose audience was equally exclusive: mainly political scientists and specialists on super power politics.

Yet, a particular book was meant to change all of that. Co-written by a Harvard-educated anthropologist (William Ury) and a professor of Law at the same university (Roger Fisher), '*Getting to Yes': Negotiating Agreement without Giving In* (Fisher and Ury 1981) became a global best-seller with 'more than two million copies in print in eighteen languages' (ibid). The book features among Berghof Center's '100 resource books in conflict resolution' (Anon. n.d.). The authors refer to it as a "straightforward, *universally applicable* method for negotiating personal and professional disputes without getting taken – and without getting angry" (Fisher and Ury 1981, emphasis added). They see 'negotiation' spreading: "more and more occasions require negotiation" (ibid.). Then, in a prophetic note, they claim that "conflict is a growth industry". Vis-a-vis the growing need for everyday negotiations on a universal scale, the authors claim to have developed a suitable perspective that goes beyond the common models of soft or hard negotiations. The 'third way to negotiate' is neither hard nor soft; it is rather "hard *and* soft" (ibid., emphasis in original). Developed at the *Harvard Negotiation Project*, the method of 'principled negotiation' helps the parties to decide issues "on their merits rather than through a

[84] In the Lebanese case, the literature on summitry goes back to before the eruption of the Civil War.

haggling process focused on what each side says it will and won't do. It suggests that you look for mutual gains whenever possible, and what where your interests conflict, you should insist that the result be based on some fair standards independent of the will of either side." (ibid. xviii).

Arguably, Getting to Yes popularized the 'science of summitry' by virtue of introducing negotiation as a universal phenomenon. "Negotiation is a fact of life", say the authors, because "everyone negotiates something every day". Thus, all kinds of people, including "parents and children, neighbors, bosses and employees, customers or corporations, tenants or diplomats" could profit from this "concise, step-by-step, proven strategy for coming to mutually acceptable agreements in every sort of conflict" (ibid.). The book defines negotiation as "a basic means of getting what you want from others. It is back-and-forth communication designed to reach an agreement when you and the other side have some interests that are shared and others that are opposed". Hence, literally *everyone* can apply this. The authors suggest, for instance, that it can be used by "United States diplomats in arms control talks with the Soviet Union; by Wall Street lawyers representing Fortune 500 companies in antitrust cases; and by couples deciding everything from where to go for vacation to how to divide their property if they get divorced." The universal applicability of the princlipled negotiation is premised on the single idea that "every negotiation is different, but the basic elements do not change." Therefore, it is an "all-purpose strategy" (ibid., xix).

Before we proceed to map the inroads of such an expansive enterprise into wider domains of popular science In Lebanon, it is essential to note that the universal claims that such approaches put forward do not necessarily enjoy popularity among experienced practitioners in the field of mediation. Joe, a U.S. citizen, and expert in mediation (his own 'dialogue enterprise' is based in Switzerland) was outspoken, when I asked him for his opinion on the likes of Fisher and Ury. In fact, he did not hesitate for a second:

> J: I avoid those guys like poison. I think they are simplistic, ridiculous (...) I find them so naïve. Apparently, the more you get away from North American cable for

lawyers, the worse that theory gets. It was created to put together legal agreements and its fine (...) The unrealistic model where you can squeeze people, like "where are your interests?", squeeze people out and then find their interests and then go to a point where you can reach an agreement doesn't have a real application in what people want to do.

NK: Is this because it is based on legalism?

J: Partly because of that, I haven't thought about it, but also ideology (...) They are good-willing, but because of ideology, it's not gonna work in the end. I remember, back when I was living in New York, talking to two guys from the Anti-Apartheid Movement, who came for a church conference within the Council of Churches. These guys were saying, 'we invited Ury and Fisher down to South Africa, we studied their books, we listened to them, we came to Harvard to listen to them, we kept on scratching our heads, what are we missing?' And then we are back to South Africa and we look at each other and we say, 'we are not missing anything, they are just idiots. It's ridiculous, it's very simplistic, it doesn't work'. So far about the Fisher-Ury stuff. (Joe Interview, Zurich)

Joe dismisses the theory of 'principled negotiation' as an offspring of North-American lawyers. He may be right or wrong in the ways that the theory fails in every other context, but the clue is that the entire book is the product of a negotiation process that originated some thousand miles away from American shores. In fact, the well hidden story behind the conception of the book leads us back to the Middle East. As both Joe, and other mediators in Lebanon told me, the book's authors served as core members of the United States Negotiation Team in the Camp David peace talks between Egypt and Israel in 1978. Getting to Yes is, in fact, grounded on this very participation of the authors in the negotiations that changed the fate of the Middle East.

Tellingly, there is nothing in the book to betray these origins, although Camp David was considered a major success by the US administration, as well as by a broad array of scholars and

experts in the Middle East. Instead, there is a single reference to the Camp David Accords in the entire book, in which the authors make the case for the good mediator to "look behind the positions" of the adversaries, that is to look at their 'interests' (ibid. 41). This is how the background story is told: "Israel had occupied the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula since the Six Day War of 1967. When Egypt and Israel sat down together in 1978 to negotiate a peace, their positions were incompatible. Israel insisted on some of the Sinai. Egypt, on the other hand, insisted that every inch of the Sinai be returned to Egyptian sovereignty. Time and again, people drew maps showing possible boundary lines that would divide the Sinai between Egypt and Israel. Compromising in this way was wholly unacceptable to Egypt. To go back to the situation as it was in 1967 was equally unacceptable to Israel. Looking at their interests instead of their positions made it possible to develop a solution. Israel's interest lay in security; (...) Egypt's interest lay in sovereignty; At Camp David, President Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Begin of Israel agreed to a plan that would return the Sinai to complete Egyptian sovereignty and, by demilitarizing large areas, would still assure Israeli security". (ibid., 41-42).[85]

Yet, there is an interesting part in the biography of the main author of 'Getting to Yes' that may destabilize taken-for-granted notions of peacemaking and accepted images of peacemakers. Before his participation in the negotiations at Camp David, Roger Fisher was already working on US foreign policy on Vietnam. The Syrian intellectual Sadiq al-Azm recalls having met Roger

[85] Reading these lines against the background of a technical perspective, one could easily conclude that the Peace Treaty at Camp David was not only a success for all parties, but also a success primarily based on the application of the correct method, that is "looking at the interests". Yet, if we choose to situate the peace treaty within its historical-political context, the picture changes dramatically. In fact, there would seem to be many reasons to doubt both the assumptions behind the alleged 'interests', as well as the extent to which the Accords brought peace to the entire region. First, both governments' declared interests *and* positions were clearly oriented towards a peace agreement. Under the auspices and the influence of the United States government, both Sadat's and Begin's incentives were to achieve peace at any cost. There is hardly any reason to believe that both parties wouldn't have found a way to sign a peace treaty even without the method that Fisher and Ury so highly praise. In fact, peace was a strategic choice of both Sadat's Egypt and Begin's Israel. Second, the signing of the Treaty gave free hand to Israel to shift attention toward its northern borders, and to invade Lebanon, lay its capital Beirut under siege and cause the death of at least 20,000 civilians. Thus, in the long run, the Camp David Accord can be regarded as the first decisive step towards another, much more lethal war than the one that it brought to an end.

Fisher in the beginning of the 1970s in Beirut. Fisher was on an alleged mission by the U.S State department to discuss 'relevant issues' with Arab intellectuals; Hence, the latter thought of Vietnam. However, it did not take much time for them to realize that the visit was related to the upcoming peace talks between Egypt and Israel. Fisher wanted to test the ground of such a possibility among Arab intellectuals and politicians (Sadiq Al-Azm personal communication, Beirut).

Yet, as Al-Azm stressed, Fisher's reputation in the circles of Arab intellectuals was seriously tainted after the leaking and publication of the notorious 'Pentagon Papers' in 1971. The Papers revealed Fisher's active involvement, not only in the public defense of the War, but also in secret Pentagon committees as 'McNaughton's long-time advisor from Harvard' (Anon. 1971). As the Papers reveal, Fisher, at the suggestion of Walt Rostow and Doug Cater, sent the President a proposal re-orienting the U.S. effort both militarily and diplomatically:

> "The flavor of his ideas, all of which had already appeared in notes to McNaughton, can be derived from a listing of the headings under which they were argued without going into his detailed arguments. His analysis fell under the following six general rubrics:
>
> *1. Pursue an on-the-ground interdiction strategy (barrier); 2. Concentrate air attacks in the southern portion of North Vietnam; 3. Offer Hanoi some realistic "yes-able" propositions; 4. Make the carrot more believable; 5. Give the NLF a decidable question; 6. Give local Viet Cong leaders a chance to opt out of the war.*
>
> The 'anti-infiltration barrier' that Harvard Professor Fisher had in mind was thought of as 'a primarily air-seeded line of *barbed wire, mines and chemicals*' (Anon. 1971, 112–169 emphasis added).

Back in the late 1960's, Fisher had suggested the abandonment of an actual on-the-ground barrier for two reasons: First, the terrain would make its construction difficult, and second, a barrier would probably evoke fierce military opposition. Ten years after the publication of the Pentagon Papers, the same Fisher will turn into a major theorist of peace 'negotiations' and one of the most

celebrated authors in the emerging field of conflict resolution. One is left to wonder: Was he fighting the same war by other means?

II. A Technicalized Dialogue: 'Focus on Process'

This popularized version of the 'science of summitry', with origins in the Middle East was taught at Harvard in early 1980's. One of Fisher's students was Ghassan Mokhaiber from Lebanon, who took classes on 'Negotiations', while pursuing a masters degree in Law at Harvard Law School in 1982. This is how he became familiar with the 'science of conflict resolution', as he calls it. Today, Ghassan is a practicing lawyer and an MP in Lebanon's parliament, as well as chief initiator of many efforts, conferences and networks in conflict resolution and peacemaking in the country (see Chapter Four for more on the history of the *Lebanese Network for Conflict Resolution*, in the inception of which Mokhaiber played a major role). As this longer excerpt from an interview with him in his MP office in the Lebanese town of Beit Mary indicates, Ghassan is a strong advocate of a 'new element' in negotiations, namely, the 'focus on the process':

> GM: Defining the field of conflict resolution would be, in my sense, not in analysis, intervention or training, *it would be framing the understanding of the conflict in terms of the process*. *More the process than the content.*(...) What is new is the focus on the process (...) I think the pretension of the conflict resolution team is that the process, if handled properly, can facilitate or handle conflicts much better.
>
> NK: Do you have a successful example?

GM: Yes, I gave you the example of the meeting between Michel Aoun and Saad Hariri in Paris.[86] I think that this meeting worked. That meeting per se wouldn't have happened if there were not skills, or information, or a proper analysis that I had in my mind to get the work properly down. All of my students are telling me that whatever they learnt had a profound impact on the way they handle their businesses. The same happened with me, because the way I handle - let me say - the skills, the knowledge of the field, have helped me in my practical life. It becomes a second nature, if I need to put it in a nutshell, I would focus on the process, rather than the substance. (...) When you start having people concerned about the way to do things, I would include them in the field and I would include the people doing it as conflict resolution practitioners. (...) *Politics is about conflict resolution, law is about conflict resolution, diplomats, everything* (...) Nikolas, this is the problem of the field: *Without the process, you cannot have any conflict resolved.*

NK: But there are people in the field who say: "no this is a problematic approach, what we need is in-depth analysis of the situation and then you can invite somebody from outside!"

GM: Yes, I agree with you, but then you have to define the field. What is ‚THE field'? With big quotation marks, what is the field of conflict resolution? In my reading, and that's part of the major criticisms of the field, it is an area which is concerned with process! And you are right about the process. *And you need to find out solutions that apply both to interpersonal and international conflicts. This is the pretension of Getting to yes. My method applies to interpersonal and intergroup and international (conflicts).* We can say that we have different skills for it, but it's always focusing on process. The focus on substance is "I tell you and you fill the gap", "I tell you what you need to do and

[86] Lebanese political leaders of opposing coalitions March 8th and March 14th. Ghassan Mokhaiber belongs to the March 8 coalition and is a standing MP for General Michel Aoun's Party. The meeting he is referring to took place in Paris before Aoun's return to Lebanon in 2005.

> bring an expert on the substance and I sit down and I do the analysis of substance“.… (...) It‘s still giving you tools, it’s a meta-game! (...) Who are the parties? What are the interests of the parties? Are we focusing on the interests of the parties or focusing on positions using the frame of analysis by Roger Fisher? Are there alternatives? What is the best alternative that we got now? Using tools of analysis that are not necessarily the tools of analysis of the political scientists. (Mokhaiber Interview, Beit Mary, Lebanon 2008, emphasis added).

Ghassan Mokhaiber, following Roger Fisher, understands dialogue as a highly technicalized activity. In his view, a successful dialogue must be carefully prepared and supervised only by those who have the skills to do so, namely those experts-specialists of the new method as it was was outlined in Getting to Yes. The focus on the process deliberately ignores any context, content or substance, as Ghassan emphatically says. This principle makes the new method applicable to a wide range of conflicts, from interpersonal to international. This universalized method, grounded on a number of particular technical rules and principles, is what Ghassan calls 'the science of conflict resolution'. Further, I chose to quote a longer passage from the interview, because I find remarkable the way through which Ghassan sketches a certain movement of the designated problem of 'conflict' and the suggested process of its resolution. First, it is situated as a dispute at the upper echelons of the society (between political leaders), and then it trickles down to less prestigious groups, such as his students and other lay people. I suggest that this horizontal depiction is not merely a way of speech. In fact, it corresponds quite appropriately to a more general movement that characterized the 'science of summitry' in the early 1980's. Books such as *Getting to Yes*, university courses and programs, such as Harvard's Negotiations, as well as crucial relays in non-US settings, such as Ghassan Mokhaiber and others in Lebanon, were instrumental for the ascendance and the global expansion of a particular movement that popularized an expert-based and top-down approach to conflict and dialogue. As we will see further below, this move towards popularization had multiple effects, as it coincided with other general developments in the domain of diplomacy. The loss of state monopoly over it could be

the most important among them, yet not the sole. Yet, the technique of peacemaking will retain much of the initial conceptual edifice that was primarily grounded on a Hobbesian perception of conflict and resolution.

III. The Expert Figure of the Mediator: 'A Good Messenger'

The *Camp David Accords* (1978) were almost exclusively handled within the domain of state monopoly of international diplomacy. Arguably, the *Oslo Accords* of 1993 ushered in a new era, in which non-state actors, such as the *Fafo Institute* of Norway, for instance, were attributed a major role in the negotiation of international disputes. Peace experts in Lebanon have often referred to Fafo's active role in the negotiations between the PLO and Israel, and how this event changed their own view of international negotiations and the projective role of non-state actors in them. By and large, Lebanon has witnessed, since the 1990s, efforts by diverse peace centers and ad hoc initiatives to facilitate negotiations between feuding political parties. Most of the time, these efforts were met with little, if any, success. However, this does not seem to curb an ongoing trend. Indeed, the latest version of a similar approach appeared in 2007 in Geneva under the acronym *ASDEAM* (Association Suisse pour le Dialogue Euro-Arabo-Musulman). ASDEAM started as a non-state mediation forum by Hassan Ghaziri, a Lebanese university professor living in Switzerland. Yet, upon request by the organizers, Swiss diplomacy endorsed the agenda and provided ASDEAM with both political backing and expert advise. This is how the Swiss ambassador in Lebanon, Barras, described the sort of involvement in a speech he gave in Beirut some months later:

> In the political field, a Lebanese national dialogue was organized in Switzerland. It was not an initiative of the Embassy, it was something which came from a Swiss NGO, called ASDEAM which came to us with a simple proposal: *nobody speaks to anybody in Lebanon*, it was early 2007, *why don't we invite people to Switzerland so that they can*

> *talk about the basics of the country*? So we invited groups of intellectuals and MP's, and they came three times to Mt Pélerin, a mountain resort above Lake Geneva. *The merit of such undertaking was at least that they finally began to speak to each other*, hence some people from the Lebanese Forces for the first time met some people from Hizbollah, and they started to discuss topics of common relevance. (Barras 2010 emphasis added)

To be sure, not everyone shares the ambassador's optimism or, for that matter, the idea that politicians did not speak to each other, as many of my interviews with participants at ASDEAM sessions have indicated.[87] However, the question of ASDEAM's success is of minor relevance here. I am more concerned with the new elements that this broader development towards non-state diplomacy has brought about. Was there a significant change in the ways that peace summits or peace negotiations were organized? How did the new type of 'dialogue technician', as Ghassan described him, reshape this particular form of peacemaking practice? What was expected from this new expert figure of the mediator?

Paul is a British citizen, who has been working for decades with the British intelligence (MI6) and the EU's diplomatic service as a negotiations expert. When I met him in Beirut, he ran a conflict think tank/NGO from there. He began our discussion with a fundamental critique of the diplomats, who he saw as 'spin doctors'. Instead of delivering an 'accurate message', the message *"*as it is", many diplomats add to it their own comments or impressions. Thus, their role as messengers is flawed. Diplomats are bad messengers, says Paul. He described to me three ways in which diplomats tend to distort the message.

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[87] Participants in ASDEAM-organized sessions expressed critique regarding the urgent need of experts familiar with Lebanon's context: "ASDEAM was good on some level. But there is a very big difference between the works of say the Red Cross, which is humanitarian and responds to emergency and solving a constitutional crisis. We need experts on the region, not just on dialogue; someone who knows the intricacies of the situation" (Massara Interview, Beirut) or: "In my understanding of national dialogue you need to bring in people that are experienced, academics, and experts on Lebanon and the region, not only on 'dialogue' in and of itself. Lebanon's context is very important" (Salloukh interview, Beirut).

The first is an "overwhelming desire to put the best gloss on the message that (they) get!" A good messenger , however, delivers the message without trying to turn it into a 'good' message: "I give the message just as it was given! If that means starting off saying 'fuck you' (sic!), I start off and say that ... and I have done that!" Second, they tend to conflate the original message with additional comments that are were not intended to be part of the message, and without communicating this to the receiving end. A good mediation expert should be able to differentiate between the comments and the message: "I say: 'here are some other comments that are not part of the message, which might help you understand it. But this is not part of the message, this is my relating of comments that people have said."

Third, they tend to supplement the message with their own subjective views about the message and the comments, without clearly stating the difference. For Paul, these principles may sound "childish and simple", but they are very difficult to maintain since 'actually very few people do that and get the message intended". As a result "all the time people find out that the message you sent hasn't been that accurate."[88]

For Paul, the role of the mediator is primarily that of a good messenger, whose task is to meticulously carry the message from one side to the other and back again. However, this role also implies another essential feature, namely, the ability to keep the dialogue between the parties going. In this sense, the rules, conditions and parameters of the dialogue are crucially essential, and the mediator's skills should focus on them. Thus, Paul says, the second important element is patience: one has to try not to tell people "what message to give in response". Dialogue between

[88] Paul gives a vivid example of how the spinning takes place between Damasucs and Tel Aviv, which I find worth quoting at length: "I mean, I worked with statesmen and the most normal way of doing it in the west right now (is that the diplomat) would go to the Israeli prime minister and say ,well, tomorrow I am going to be in Damascus', and the Israeli prime minister would say 'Oh, the Syrians, they are so unheplful. Take the statement they made yesterday. They said da di da di da... what they got to understand is x y z'. Then he will go to Damascus and say: 'I have a message from the Israeli prime minister, I must see the president now!' And then he says: 'This is the message from the Israeli prime minister' and then he spins the comment that was made in passing, exclamation into a message that it was never intended to be and usually provokes some sort of reaction. And then he will go back to the Israeli and says: 'I got a message', but there was no message of course! The Israeli prime minister never sent that message and the Syrian president didn't intend to send the message to Israel! Diplomats do this turning a lot!" (Paul Interview, Beirut).

the parties must go on and the mediator must clearly respect the process. At least until the moment where things "have started to develop" and "the people start actually doing politics", the role of a good mediator is to respect the process of dialogue "as it is".

Then, if things have advanced, the parties may ask the mediator what to do with a negative message. Paul insists that the best advice at this stage is to "pick up the bits you like and ignore the parts you don't like". Instead of saying "I don't like this", when referring to the second part of the sentence, he suggests to say that the first part of the sentence is "really interesting to hear, you say that this is part of the solution, we agree!".[89] (Paul Interview, Beirut).

To sum up, one could argue that to think of the Doha summit as a mere response to the May Events would mean to focus on the tree of the agreement and miss the forest of a distinct form of the power to pacify. This type of power resides less in the task of bringing feuding statesmen to "speak to each other" than in the capacity to expand and deploy a perception of peacemaking that is essentially made up of the conceptual material of the Hobbesian notion of sovereignty. To be sure, what I propose to call the Hobbesian peacemaking constitutes an assemblage of diverse elements. Essential among those elements are different versions of social scientific theories of *rational choice*.

In general, *rational choice theory* regards the material, strategic, and personal interests of the participants of an interaction as the instrumental elements that guide their actions, choices and positions. Actors enter interactions with the sole or, at least, the chief aim of realizing their interests through strategic moves and positions (Risse 2000, 3). In such interactions, 'rationality' is regarded as instrumental and practical, and 'rational participants' are clearly aiming towards maximizing gains and optimizing outcomes. Subsequently, the theory of rational choice celebrates successful agreements in negotiations as exemplary cases in which the strategic

[89] Paul believes that this is especially hard to do when some groups are marginalized and isolated: "They find it very, very hard (...) at the beginning to say something positive about an overwhelming power that is isolating them or arresting or killing them. Particularly when they have been killed, it's very hard, but that's when the mediator can actually help." (Paul Interview, Beirut)

interests of both parties can be more or less equally satisfied. Hence, "rational choice is instrumental: it is guided by the outcome of action. Actions are valued and chosen not for themselves, but as more or less efficient means to a further end'' (Elster 1989, 22, quoted in Risse ibid.). Therefore, the basic unit of the 'rational choice theory' is the strategic, rational individual who enters interactions with the clear aim of maximizing outcomes. Hobbesian peace reiterates these principles and, as we saw in the case of 'Getting to Yes', expands them beyond the scope of state leadership.

Hobbesian peace is crucially grounded on the political technology of the summit. Yet, the summit should not be understood here as what political leaders do in cases of emergencies and crises. As my narrative shows, around the practice of summitry there has been developed a distinct array of theories, ideas, institutions and networks that reproduce and redeploy, in a permanent and rather banal way, a particular notion of sovereignty. Such a perspective of the summit as a permanent technology of the power to pacify could complicate current debates on the idea of sovereignty. The recently rediscovered political theology, for example, regards the origin of sovereign power to be the 'state of exception', namely the suspension of rules and conventions and the creation of a new political order in which the sovereign may appear to be at the same time above and beyond the law. To be sure, at the level of higher state rule, the May Events could indeed be portrayed as a paradigmatic moment in which *a state of exception* may be introduced. Yet, the opening of the perspective onto expanded and institutionalized forms of the 'science of summitry' – along with the conceptual and moral apparatus that accompanies them – draws a more complicated image of how sovereignty qua peacemaking works.

Thus, instead of an image of sovereignty as the localized outcome of the state of exception and crisis, it appears that sovereignty is rather manufactured at the level of the minutiae and the trivial, and not at the level of the spectacular and the critical. Instead of deriving from the decisive power of the all-mighty sovereign or the brutal violence of the state, it seems, rather, to be the construct of the meticulous working of invisible experts. And then finally, instead of looking for the conceptual and ethical laboratories of sovereignty on either side of established dichotomies,

such as ritual/modern, local/global, crisis/normalcy, it may be more advisable to search at the moments and the sites of the blurring of these boundaries.

In New York, the UN Secretary-General 'Strongly Condemns'...

Lebanon is an important hub of the United Nations in the entire Arab region. It hosts a number of U.N. bodies, the most important of which are: *UNRWA* (United Nations Refugee Works Agency for humanitarian assistance to Palestinian refugee camps), *ESCWA* (Economic and Social Council of West Asia - the West Asian/Arab branch of ECOSOC, Economic and Social Council of the United Nations) and *UNIFIL* (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon - a military presence of 14,000 peacekeepers in South Lebanon). As far as I know, there was absolutely no official reaction by any of these bodies to the May 2008 violence. In fact, both during and after the clashes, the entire U.N. staff in Lebanon continually received written messages on their mobile phones by the Security Section of the United Nations in Lebanon. These –relatively frequent - messages included actual information about the security situation, as well as strict recommendations to "stay at home" and to avoid any movement in the streets.

Hence, the only official reaction to the events on behalf of the world's major peace keeping institution came from its head, the Secretary-General (henceforth SG) in the form of press releases and statements. In the first one, issued on May 12, 2008, with the serial number SG/SM/11560, almost a week after the initial outburst of violence, the SG appeared to be doing a number of things and expressing a number of opinions: He would thus *strongly condemn* ("those responsible for Lebanon violence"), *urge* ("calm and restraint"), call (... "on all parties to resume national dialogue"), *express* ("his solidarity with the people"), *firmly support* ("the initiative of the Arab League") and once again *call* ("for the upholding of the independence, sovereigtny and integrity of Lebanon").

12 May 2008

Secretary-General
SG/SM/11560

Department of Public Information ï News and Media Division ï New York

SECRETARY-GENERAL STRONGLY CONDEMNS THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR LEBANON VIOLENCE,

CALLS ON PARTIES TO RESUME NATIONAL DIALOGUE

The following statement was issued today by the Spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon:

The Secretary-General strongly condemns those responsible for the violence in Lebanon over the last week, and *urges* calm and restraint, and an immediate stop to the violence. He calls on all parties to resume the national dialogue. Lebanon needs a political process which will result in the election of a President and a solution to the prolonged political crisis.

The Secretary-General expresses his solidarity with the people and Government of Lebanon, and other legitimate Lebanese institutions, including the Lebanese Armed Forces. The Secretary-General firmly supports the initiative of the League of Arab States aimed at finding a solution.

The Secretary-General calls for the upholding of the independence, sovereignty and integrity of Lebanon and the implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions pertaining to Lebanon.[90]

Figure 3.4 Press Release SG/SM/11560 12 May 2008

Nine days later, and after the initial agreements in Doha, a second press release followed (21 May 2008, no. SG/SM/11586). The tone was slightly different. Now, the Secretary General would first

[90] One day later, while the Lebanese politicians were negotiating in Doha, «Ban Ki-moon and 'Friends of Lebanon' welcome(d) diplomatic efforts to end crisis.»[90] The statement called for the immediate election of a president without prior conditions and the establishment of a national unity government. The Friends' statement added that, *"We remain deeply concerned by the situation in Lebanon,"* and called *«for the immediate cessation of violence, the withdrawal of gunmen from the streets, the unblocking of roads and the reopening of Beirut International Airport».*

of all ‘welcome the important agreement reached in Doha’. But more importantly, he expressed the hope that this agreement would be the prelude to a number of things, such as a ‘lasting period of national reconciliation, political stability, peace and progress for all Lebanese people and for the future of their country’, as well as ‘the full implementation of the provisions of the Taif Agreement and the relevant Security Council resolutions,’ but also to ‘the early election of the new Lebanese President and to the formation of a National Unity Government.’ (s. full text as well as form of the press release below).

21 May 2008

Secretary-General
SG/SM/11586

Department of Public Information ï News and Media Division ï New York

SECRETARY-GENERAL WELCOMES AGREEMENT AMONG LEBANONíS POLITICAL LEADERS, LOOKS

FORWARD TO EARLY ELECTION OF LEBANESE PRESIDENT, NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT

The following statement was issued today by the Spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon:

The Secretary-General welcomes the important agreement reached in Doha today among Lebanese political leaders. He hopes this agreement will be the prelude to a lasting period of national reconciliation, political stability, peace and progress for all Lebanese people and for the future of their country, as well as a stepping stone towards the full implementation of the provisions of the Taif Agreement and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

He looks forward to the early election of the new Lebanese President and to the formation of a National Unity Government. The Secretary-General expresses his great appreciation for the crucial efforts of the Government of Qatar and the League of Arab States in facilitating this agreement.

Figure 3.5 Press Release SG/SM/11586 21 May 2008

Taken on face value, the sequel of these two press releases qualifies as response of the United Nations' head towards relevant events in Lebanon. The first contains a strong condemnation of violence, while the second clearly signals support and approval for the peace agreement. As such, they seem straight-forward, plausible and commonsensical, almost self-evident. There is no apparent reason to regard these lines – written black on white – other than a more sophisticated, and succintly formulated expression of sensibilities and opinions that the Secretary General developed vis-à-vis May's violence. One has only to take note of these words and then move fast forward to the most interesting facts on the ground. Right? Wrong. I would suggest a pause here and, thus, offer to submit these documents to a more rigorous examination from the perspective of their function as technologies of peacemaking. In fact, instead of taking them for granted, and move on, I believe that a set of much more interesting questions arise if we consider these documents within another framework: namely, less as responses to facts on the ground, but as *inherently constitutive of the process of creating those very facts*. In examining these documents closely, I take my cue from recent approaches in anthropological thought that can be situated within what has been commonly known as *Science and Technology Studies*. Scholars such as Bruno Latour (1987), Donald Brenneis (1994) and Annelise Riles (2006) have cautioned ethnographers against taking anything for granted when it comes to truth-claiming documents.

In what follows, I argue that such an approach may lead us to think of these statements as part of what I propose to call the *Holocaustian peace*. This is a distinct form of the contemporary power to pacify, which is grounded on two major operations, i.e. a scientific and a moral. First, the scientific establishment of a certain kind of unequivocal truth, i.e. the confirmation of a set of undeniable facts, such as genocide or crimes against humanity. Second, the moral principle of the responsibility to protect populations, such as vulnerable and targeted ethnic groups that are threatened by the uncontrolled unravelling of the previously established facts.

The UN-SG's Statement: Holocaustian Peace and the Making of Facts

In a scathing critique of modern-day military interventions in the name of humanitarianism, Mahmood Mamdani (2009) traces the heralding of what he calls "an international humanitarian order" at the end of the Cold War. From then on, state sovereignty was to be held accountable to an international human rights standard (ibid. 273). At the core of this new order lies the 'responsibility to protect' vulnerable populations. This responsibility is to be enforced by the 'international community' and to be exercised in practice by the United Nations, and in particular, by the Security Council.[91]

> The international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to help to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In this context we are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII (…), should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity (World Health Organization 2005, 31).

There are at least two things that must be noted about this new order of intervention for the protection of populations. First, it is not a very new order, after all. As Mamdani also notes, the era of the international humanitarian order draws on the history of modern Western colonialism. Colonial powers, such as Britain, France, Austria, Russia very often needed to justify military

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[91] Titled 'The responsibility to protect' (also referred to as R2P), an influential report by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty was published in 2001 (ICISS 2001). The study was commissioned by the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The R2P principle was adopted by the U.N.'s 2005 World Summit and enjoys global currency ever since (Weiss 2004; Hamilton 2006; G. Evans and Sahnoun 2002). As Didier Fassin and Pandolfi note in the Introduction of Contemporary States of emergency, the principle that "the only higher reasons that can be set against international law are protecting populations at risk, saving the lives of those in danger, and relieving human suffering" was adopted by the World Summit of September 16, 2005, under the new denomination "responsibility to protect" or R2P, in the UN jargon.

interventions in the name of protection of groups that were either actively persecuted or were facing the threat of persecution. Lebanon's own history of how the colonial powers (France, Britain, Russia) distributed among themselves the guardianship of designated sects (Maronites, Druzes, Greek Orthodox respectively) from the mid-18th century onward is an exemplary case for this kind of intervention. Yet, one could suggest that only after the end of World War II, and the moral lessons from the Holocaust did the protection of human rights receive international acceptance. Indeed, the latter was enshrined in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UN General Assembly 1948).

Second, at the very heart of this new order lies the politics of naming and labelling. Mamdani clarifies that the regime identified with the international humanitarian order makes "a sharp distinction between genocide and other kinds of violence" (ibid. 277). Thus, while the former is regarded as appaling, amoral, evil, other state-driven forms of mass violence, such as war or counterinsurgency appear to be within the domain of the 'normal'. Yet, when, how and who gets to decide whether "genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and/or crimes against humanity" is taking place? According to which criteria (scientific, moral, political) could any international body 'responsible' for the protection of the populations under threat substantiate these claims? What is and who draws the boundary between state sovereignty and the protection of populations? Where does 'normal war' (sic!) end and where does genocide begin? To be sure, we are threading on thin ice here.

The politics of naming are essential in every past and present conflict. In Sudan, for example, the debate between the United States and the United Nations/African Union was not over the scale of violence but over how to call it, to name it (ibid. 279). For instance, the same politics of naming are behind the reluctancy of the United States to become a signatory of the International Criminal Court out of fear that US military interventions overseas might get labelled 'crimes against humanity' at some point in the future. Once again, the politics of naming have colonial roots since colonialism shaped the very nature of modern indirect rule along 'tribal' or ethnic lines, as Mamdani thoughtfully notes. Yet again, it was only after the Holocaust that the first efforts were

undertaken towards an internationally accepted definition of the crime of 'genocide' (United Nations General Assembly 1948; Kunz 1949).

Thus, the politics of naming and intervention go hand in hand. Together they constitute the moral-political ground upon which, what I propose to call, *Holocaustian peace* is laid out. This particular kind of the power to pacify is special because it aspires to be universal in at least two ways. One, the moral responsibility to protect populations under threat in every corner of the world, if possible. Second, the scientifc ways of establishing the truth, namely, universally undeniable facts. Interestingly, critics of this new order most commonly focus on the first strand. And although the politics of naming features centrally in their accounts (as we saw with Mamdani for example), the ethnographic details of the production of facts often go unattended. In the next pages, I look closely at the U.N. documents mentioned above in an effort, not to analyze the discourse or its deeper meaning, but rather to focus on the technical- and yet highly political – ways of establishing the 'truth'. This, I argue, entail three features: an aesthetic of authority, a rhetoric of factuality and the elimination of possible disputes. In this endeavor, I draw heavily upon Bruno Latour's 'Science in Action' (1987). Although Latour's method is mainly thought of as a way of analyzing the production of scientifc facts, its basic tenets can be easily adjusted to the U.N. documents examined here, since the latter are heavily involved in crucial processes of what Latour calls 'fact-writing'.

I. An Aesthetic of Authority

According to the Research Guide of the *United Nations Documentation*, "Press releases serve information purposes only and are not considered official documents. They constitute, however, a valuable tool for research on current topics since they are produced well in advance of official documents." (United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library 2011a). Every press release carries a "basic symbol", which consists of a letter/number combination. "The letter code stands for either

the topic to which the press release refers, or the body around which the press release reports. The number is simply a sequential number assigned to each press release and represents the chronological order in which the releases are published." (ibid.) For instance, the letter code of the above quoted documents on Lebanon is 'SG/ST' which – according to the *Index of Press Release Series Symbols* (United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library 2011b s. below) stands for *Press Conferences (Secretary-Genera*l) or *SG/SM/ Secretary-General: statements and messages*. Needless to say, there are dozens – if not hundreds - of similar letter codes, which serve to classify and systematize press relases according to the U.N. body who issued them or the particular topic they address (see Table 3.1)

GA/ GENERAL ASSEMBLY
GA/SM/ PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: STATEMENTS AND MESSAGES GA/DIS/ 1ST COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (DISARMAMENT)
GA/EF/ 2ND COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL) GA/SHC/ 3RD COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN/CULTURAL)
GA/SPD/ 4TH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (SPECIAL POLITICAL/DECOLONIZATION)
GA/AB/ 5TH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (ADMINISTRATIVE/BUDGETARY) GA/L/ 6TH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (LEGAL) SC/ SECURITY COUNCIL ECOSOC/ ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
SG/SM/ SECRETARY-GENERAL: STATEMENTS AND MESSAGES

Table 3.1 United Nations Press Releases Series Symbols

Source: United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library

Thus, the documents that concern us here - *SG/SM/11560* and *SG/SM/11586* – are not stand-alone documents. They are already embedded within multiple series of past and future documents and are classified according to topic, type, responsible body and temporality. Thus, as an essential part of a much greater and well-organized corpus of documents, every single document gains in credibility. Arguably, intertextuality is the first feature of the aesthetics of authority. Put together, the press releases constitute a corpus of authoritative documents, which appear very difficult to

doubt. The inter-reference strengthens the claims of each text and of all of them together. In brief, each text lends support to another text's claims. Any attempt to doubt a particular text runs the risk of having to question the entire corpus.

Further, and more importantly, there are essential elements of intertextuality within the documents themselves. For example, in the document no. SG/SM/11560 there is a call for the implementation of 'all relevant Security Council resolutions pertaining to Lebanon'. In the later document we learn that - in addition to the 'relevant Security Council resolutions' - the 'provisions of the Taif Agreement' must be also implemented. This tactic of linking a series of official documents together not only tells the story of Lebanon's conflict as a chronology of authoritative agreements, but it also lends authority to the statement itself by the virtue of embedding it within a series of what Latour calls 'black boxes', namely, things - theories, documents, institutions, arguments - that cannot be easily disputed. Thus, the more black boxes to which a statement refers, the more it becomes itself a black box, and thus, indisputable. An argument of authority is often crucially made through the 'appeal to allies' (ibid. 38). Reliable allies are - in an argument over scientific truths, for example – what Latour calls 'technicalities', namely those highly specialized and erudite domains of knowledge that are usually inaccessible to lay people.

But also in an argument over the May Events in Lebanon, authoritative documents, UN resolutions and official government bodies are equally assembled in the form of 'reliable allies'. Hence, both documents refer explicitly and solely to recognized instances of state (or inter-state) sovereignty: 'the Government of Lebanon,' 'The President of Lebanon,' 'The Lebanese Armed Forces,' 'the League of Arab States' etc. As Latour notes, the effect of references on persuasion is not limited to that of 'prestige' or 'bluff'. Again, it is a "question of numbers." (ibid.) If one wishes to engage critically with the documents, one might have to do it as well with much of the 'reliable allies' that have been *invited* by the author in the form of references and other sources.

II. A Rhetoric of Factuality

Latour argues that the construction of facts is a collective process. However, *collective* here means to delineate less the involvement of people only, than of complex assemblages of people, objects, theories, authoritative claims etc, briefly 'actants'. Hence, a given sentence that is presented in the form of a scientific claim to truth, "by itself (...) is neither a fact nor a fiction; It is made so by others, later on. You make it more of a fact if you insert it as a closed, obvious, firm and packaged premise leading to some other less closed, less obvious, less firm, and less united consequence" (ibid. 25).

The press releases under study contain a number of similarly constructed sentences: *The Secretary General condemns,... firmly supports..., expresses his solidarity..., calls for the upholding...* etc. Grammatically speaking, a repetitive tripartite form can be distinguished. It includes: the s*ubject*, i.e. 'The Secretary General' (henceforth part A), a *verb* that expresses value judgment, action or emotions (henceforth part B) and finally a *fact* upon which actions are expected, or opinions are applied: "those responsible for the violence in Lebanon"; "National Dialogue" etc. (henceforth part C). The relationship between (part B) and (part C) is crucial here, because out of the implicit comparison between them in terms of truth, (part C) appears as 'a closed, obvious, firm and packaged premise', i.e. an indisputable fact.

This is what one may label a rhetoric of factuality, which is grounded both on a certain form of collective assemblage of particular elements, as well as on the simple principle of repetition. Indeed, if we go back and forth in the same calender year, we will discover that the Secretary General had issued a number of press releases on Lebanon. They all had a similar format, albeit they referred to a variety of issues. Thus, in the course of 2008, the Secretary General (Part A) condemned (Part B) the following *facts* (Part C): *Rocket Attacks on Israel* (January 11); *Attacks Against Peacekeepers* (also on January 11), *Beirut Bombing* (15 January), *Fatal Bomb Attack on*

Lebanese Security Officer (25 January), *Those Responsible for Lebanon Violence* (12 May), *Northern Lebanon Bombing* (13 August), *Lethal Lebanon Terrorist Attack* (11 September), *Terrorist Attack in Tripoli, Lebanon* (29 September).

In the same format, the Secretary General (Part A) welcomed (Part B) the following *facts* (Part C): *Outcome of Syrian-Lebanese Summit* (14 August), *"historic Steps" Towards Full Diplomatic Relations Between Lebanon, Syria* (15 October), *Agreement Among Lebanon's Political Leaders* (21 May). Finally, he congratulated once the *Lebanese on Election of New President* (27 May) and looked forward to *Early Election of Lebanese President, National Unity Government* (21 May).

Arguably, the tripartite form of the sentence has the effect of stabilizing both parts (A) and (C), and of placing the entire emphasis on part (B). Part (B) provides then the moral and political interpretation/translation/commentary by the Secretary General (Part A) on the *facts* (Part C). It is thus only this part that is presented as a result of a decision – a *crisis* in the sense of the Greek *krino* - that was taken and, thus, must be communicated. The effect of stabilization makes it less evocative to suggest that either the SG - as a real person - or the facts - as real events - could be scrutinized or disputed. What is submitted to *crisis* is thus only part (B). Facts happen, this form tells us, but they are not yet assessed as such until part (B) features in front of them. Within the structure of this kind of sentence, *facts* become subject to a particular agenda which is comprised of a political program and a moral framework at the same time. The condemnations and the congratulations by the Secretary General are much less determined than the actions that they condemn or congratulate each time. The first is *crisis*, the latter is *truth*. Indeed, this rhetoric of factuality seems utterly successful, since these statements can be said to have achieved the status of 'incorporation'on their way towards becoming facts (s. below). Yet, there are some last details that must be taken care of for the completion of this operation.

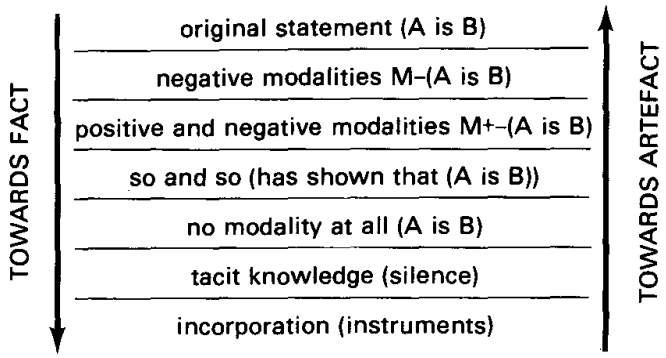

Table 3.2. "Towards Fact"

Bruno Latour, Science in Action, (p.44)

III. The Elimination of Disputes

As we have seen so far, the format of the U.N. statement leaves little space for scrutiny. The facts in these statements appear to be indisputable. Further, such statements are convincing, because they successfully hide the arbitrariness and controversy that permeates them. Thus, they carefully avoid, for example, any - nominal even - reference to entities or actors that may have a disputable or controversial position, such as political parties, or unelected officials, or 'non-state actors'. They include solely references to widely known, universally recognizable and indisputable entities (government, army, president etc.).

Another crucial aspect of their success is the sense of decontextualization that they produce. An organized aesthetic of authority and a well-structured rhetoric of factuality contribute to the assumption that the documents are devoid of ownership, construction, context. They seem almost eternal. To be sure, depending on how credible this operation towards decontextualization is to external observers and readers, the latter will direct their actions and critical capacities in different directions. As Latour says, according to which way we go, the inserted sentences will change status. They will become either historical facts or major controversies; either black boxes or disputes. So, if the operation is successful, one will have to head to Beirut and seek to assess the impact of the indisputable facts 'on the ground'. Hence, in a case of a 'terrorist bombing', one

will begin to search for motives, damage, evidence, and for possible shifts in the power relations and the security arrangements in Lebanon. If credibility fails, one will have to book a plane to New York City, where one can visit the U.N. headquarters and begin posing questions about what is defined as 'terrorism' for example. One could wonder about the institutionalized channels of information and communication around the Secretary General, about his personal history and biography, about the persons around him who consult on a regular basis with him, about the aide who writes his speeches or his statements, etc. To be sure, most of the time, however, the operation is deemed successful and, thus, researchers, reporters, and observers head to Beirut instead of New York. One may ask, what would happen if one chose to travel in the opposite direction?

Following Latour, one is utterly tempted to ignore the finality of these documents and, thus, go back to the earlier stages of their production. However, fieldwork has shown that the laboratories of these U.N. documents are to social scientists even less accessible than those of NASA or bio-chemists, for instance. Arguably, the regime of inaccessibility of external researchers into the U.N. sanctuary strengthens the possibilities for the final product to be persuasive, because it eliminates any disputes that may arise at earlier stages of the making of *facts*. The closed-door-policy of most of the agencies at the United Nations directs analysis and critical capacities away from New York, and, therefore, ensures the acceptability of what they label as *facts*. Indeed, there is hardly any institution on a global scale today whose claim to truth-making is still relatively dominant and that still has been so succesful in keeping critical social science away from its own laboratories of fact-making.

Fieldwork Excourse: The Micro-politics of Labelling in Beirut

In the previous sections, I discussed some of the basic controversies around the politics of naming within what Madmani called 'the new humanitarian order'. I also casted an analytical glance at

some of the ways that the politics of naming and fact-making are organized within the complex edifices of the United Nations. Alas, both of these inroads were taken from an ethnographic distance. In this brief excourse, I intend to offer a fieldwork-based perspective on the politics of naming in a much less formal context. In fact, the story that I am about to tell took place only few years ago in a small living room at an apartment in the district of Gemmayze in Beirut. The flat was shared by Bassim, a Lebanese man in his mid-20s, working in a peace NGO, and my 'informant' and long-time friend, and Bob, a U.S. man in his early 30s, employed as Lecturer of English at the American University of Beirut. (What follows is a slightly edited excerpt from my fieldnotes)

"At the beginning of the evening, Bassim was talking to me about his upbringing as a little communist in a Druze village in the Shouf mountains (South-East Lebanon): 'In the Chouf you would always read Marx and Lenin, but (Kamal) Jumblatt (the leader of the Lebanese National Movement during the Civil War) was always saying that one has to read it with critical spirit.. so, this is how I grew up.' This discussion was interrupted when his flatmate joined us. We started a huge debate about US policy in the Middle East, Hizbullah, humanitarianism, and terminology of global politics (as Bassim himself put it) and so on.. The setting was quite symbolic, I would say in the aftermath. A Druze Arab and NGO worker for conflict resolution hosts an American lecturer of english at the AUB, specialized in genocide studies and a Greek anthropologist, who is labeled "radical" (according, again, to Bassim).

At the beginning, Bassim was lashing out against Hizbullah with the help of his flatmate. Then, the debate became merely a ping-pong match between me and Bob on the "war of terror". I was talking about the devastating effects it has on global discourses and practices of security, while Bob was voicing doubts about the change of sea I was arguing about. He kept saying that torture, invasion and crimes against humanity have always been the resort of state power. He insited that nothing has changed on a global level now that the Bush administration has introduced new definitions of torture or humanitarianism. We also talked about the UN and how this may have changed. Bassim has taken the role of the mediator between 'Old Europe' and the New World,

adding that unilateral interventions shall be justified if they are indeed driven by humanitarianism. Bassim was mostly interfering in a compromising way, always almost referring or contextualizing the discussion according to his experience as Arab or Lebanese. On the other hand, his flatmate was confidently bringing examples from all over the globe, ranging from East Timor and Sudan to West Sahara and Zimbabwe.

Bassim's red line was the circumvention of the UN by the US administration. He said 'this creates an example where one can define the rules as one wants. This is bad. This would mean that Hizbullah would be able to define what is the rule of law. I think that they shall respect the UN, the ideals of humanitarianism, the human rights". His flatmate was constantly bringing up the example of Rwanda in order to justify military interventions to prevent genocide. At a point, I begun to feel that here in this small living room in downtown Beirut I was witnessing a symbolic enactment of the global discourses on genocicde, humanitarianism and military intervention. On one hand, an American from Alabama, who boasts a global outreach when it comes to geography and historical knowledge, holding a degree in "genocide studies". On the other hand, a Greek from Athens, who is rendered to the role of the old-style, Old Europe-based leftist, criticizing arbitrary American military intervention around the globe and who, as an anthropologist, raises issues of the given plurality and complexity of widespread discourses on terror and humanitarianism. In between those two, as a mediator, a Lebanese peace maker, who is sick of his 'nation' and its leaders, and who is constantly trying to compromise between "great humanistic ideals born in Europe" and his predicament as a postcolonial subject.

The discussion kept on intensively throughout the evening. Although me and his flatmate held on to our "extreme" positions, Bassim kept the attitude of mediating, trying again and again to reformulate or translate what I had just said to my 'adversary', or vice versa, adding often his accent on each thesis or position. At a point, already very late in the night, his flatmate went to sleep and Bassim revealed to me more about his relationship with him: 'He is teaching me good things' Bassim said about Bob. 'Before I met him, I was talking like an Arab, (saying) "look what the Jews are doing", "who knows what happened with the Holocaust" and all these things that the

Arabs are saying. He taught me how stupid this way to talk is. I am now able to know which is the best argument to persuade a European, which is the thing that he can listen to… when it comes to Israel, I don't tell him, 'the Jews shall go back to Europe, where they came from.' Instead, I tell him about the reformist historiographers in Israel and their accounts on ethnic cleansing. I am learning to debate with Europeans and Westerners through the discussions with my flatmate.'

I leave the apartment way after midnight. I am overwhelmed by the ferocity of the debate, but more than anything by the complexity of this friend of mine. Bassim is Druze, he grew up as a 'warrior' as he says, and now he is being taught non-violent methods and theories in Lebanon and in Europe. He is striving to maintain all of these identifications within him. At the same time, he is increasingly becoming aware of the different worlds out there, as a flatmate with an American lecturer of genocide studies who teaches him some "politically correct" language to talk to the West.

Bassim characterized the discussion quite well. It was a discussion on 'terminology', he said, catching the point with his sharp eye. I spent my evening talking about "the war of the words" and Bassim is a perfect example of how this works on a local level. His American flatmate imports in Lebanon the 'politically correct' ideas on violence, genocide, humanitarianism, justice etc., which are produced in the West and which Bassim rushes to adopt, in order for him to be able to "persuade Westerners". The argument I was making throughout the entire evening seems to have been proven in the most direct way, namely the fact that Bassim is being taught how "terminology" is used. At the end, Bassim called me a 'radical'. I asked him who was the 'radical among us, since I am in support of U.N.-based multilateralism, while his flatmate defends American unilaterism.' It was again an issue of "terminology", he responded."

In Beirut, the 'Lebanese Civil Society Responds to Crisis'

Scene no.1: Rafiq al Hariri Airport

On the departure day of Lebanon's leaders to Qatar, they were met at the airport by a score of activists and demonstrators. Some in wheelchairs, the protesters were holding signs with a clear message to the leaders: "If you don't agree (to a solution), don't come back"![92] The demonstration was called by a handful of civil society actors, such as the 'Lebanese Union for the Disabled', and included some peace NGOs, as well as members of the 'Khallas' movement.[93] The rationale was to put pressure on the politicians to find a way out of the deadlock. In fact, the airport demonstration was the first and the most significant effort on behalf of 'civil society' in Lebanon to mobilize during and after the May Events. Although the demonstration was mainly organized by older peace activists, who had experience from anti-war protests during the last years of the civil war, many young peace NGOs members were also present.[94] The statement "if you dont agree, dont come back" deserves special attention here. One possible way to rephrase and interpret it is the following: "If you cannot agree among yourselves, then you are not allowed to be part of the *body politic* of the nation, and definitely not allowed to be at the top of it." The statement simultaneously challenges and reasserts the authority of the rulers. Hence, only if the rulers agree on the ways to organize their rule over the rest can they be accepted and respected as such.

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[92] One person interviewed on Lebanese TV joked when asked to comment on the potential resolution at Doha: 'If they don't agree we should close the airport to prevent them all from returning.' Quoted in (Makdissi 2008)

[93] 'Khallas' was a civil society assemblage, comprised of many NGOs members that demanded an end ('khallas' means 'enough' in Arabic) to the standoff between the two main political rivals, March 8 and March 14.

[94] This is how 'The Daily Star' of Lebanon described the airport protest: 'Members from Lebanon's civil society gathered on the road to the airport stressed that they were not a minority and would resort "to all available peaceful measures to ensure the Constitution is respected." Demonstrators also considered resorting to military force to acquire political rights as "a violation of human rights and as trespassing on the legitimate constitutional institutions, democratic values, and a threat to civil peace." "The safety of Lebanese citizens is the responsibility of the Lebanese official security institutions headed by the Lebanese Army," the statement said.' (The Daily Star 2008b)

Scene no.2: Universities across Lebanon

As soon as the universities in Lebanon re-opened their doors to the students, their administrations (at Balamand and at Saint Joseph Universities, for example) invited specialized trainers to organize workshops and sessions of conflict resolution among the students (fieldwork communication). Further, the administration of the American University of Beirut circulated a communiqué noting that every single strife was to be dealt with immediate expulsion.

Site no.3: UNESCO Palace in Beirut

A few weeks after the end of street violence, an electronic invitation (e-mail) was sent by 'The Lebanese Civil Society Initiative' to 400 civil society organizations in Lebanon (see Fig. 3.6). It was an invitation to a conference called 'Lebanese civil society: responding to crisis'.

Figure 3.6a "Invitation: Lebanese Civil Society Responding to Crisis"

Source: Author's archive

Dear Sir/ Madame

It is our honor to invite you to attend the National 'Lebanese Civil Society: Responding to Crisis' conference, to be held at the UNESCO Palace in Beirut, Lebanon. This conference will take place on 13-14 June, 2008.

At the conference, we will discuss previous civil society responses to violent conflict in Lebanon, focusing specifically on the recent events. More so, we will look at the challenges that we, as civil society organizations (CSO's), face in responding to the outbreak of violence. Based on these findings, the conference will build strategies for CSO's to:

- Prevent violence and/or be aware of its outbreak through early warning and early response mechanisms.
- Respond quickly and appropriately in a coordinated effort when violent conflict does occur.
- Work with communities in the aftermath of violence to reconcile tensions that may have surfaced, as well as hold individuals and organizations accountable.

Our overall goal is to strengthen not only horizontal ties between Lebanese CSO's but vertical ties as well, to both governmental and international organizations, in order to achieve greater coherence and collaboration in addressing violent conflict in Lebanon.

Regarding this matter and to implement the above strategies, we are proposing the formation of a coalition or network specifically devoted to mitigating, responding and reconciling violent conflict in Lebanon.

Attached you will find a small survey to gather background information on your response to the recent events. These results will be presented anonymously at the conference. Thank you in advance for your time in filling this out.

We greatly welcome your input at this conference and will be happy to accommodate up to two additional colleagues from your organization.

Please RSVP with your confirmation and completed survey by 10 June 2008.

Yours sincerely,

The Lebanese Civil Society Initiative[1].

Program/ Agenda

Day 1:	
Time	**Activity**
08:30	Registration
09:00	Introductory Plenary; Guest Speakers
10:30	Coffe Break
10:45	Collaborative Workshops (by sector)
01:00	Lunch
02:00	Presentation of workshop results
02:45	Collaborative Workshops (by region)
04:00	End of Day - Networking
Day 2:	

08:45	Check-in
09:00	Summary of Friday's workshops; Guest Speaker
10:00	Lebanese Civil Society Responds to Crisis Network
10:45	Coffe Break
11:00	Action Planning Workshops I: Structures and Communication
12:30	Lunch
13:45	Action Planning Workshops II: Design and Implementation
03:45	Conference closing and Next Steps

[1] This initiative is a collection of civil society organizations coming together in response to the recent events in Lebanon.

Figure 3.6b "Invitation: Lebanese Civil Society Responding to Crisis"

Source: Author's archive

The mastermind behind the invitation was a major peace NGO in Lebanon, but it preferred to keep the invitation anonymous in order to avoid the 'ego trip', as one of the NGO staff told me (personal communication). The initiative was mainly sponsored by Western donors, such as the Catholic Relief Service, and others.

To be sure, the topic and the overall design of the conference were organized around the themes of *crisis* and *response*. This is also reflected pretty clearly in the conference title and in the content of the invitation. Basically, the main idea was to assess (through individual surveys, see below), discuss (in so-called 'collaborative workshops') and strategize (in so-called 'action

planning workshops') civil society's previous and future responses to crisis and violent conflict. This is how the organizers' invitation described the main aims of the conference:

> At the conference, we will discuss previous civil society responses to violent conflict in Lebanon, focusing specifically on the recent events. More so, we will look at the challenges that we, as civil society organizations (CSO's), face in responding to the outbreak of violence. Based on these findings, the conference will build strategies for CSO's to:
>
> • Prevent violence and/or be aware of its outbreak through early warning and early response mechanisms.
>
> • Respond quickly and appropriately in a coordinated effort when violent conflict does occur.
>
> • Work with communities in the aftermath of violence to reconcile tensions that may have surfaced, as well as hold individuals and organizations accountable.

As the invitation shows, the question of civil society's response to violence and crisis is thus articulated within three distinct clusters: prevention (of violence), reconciliation (of communities), and accountability (of perpetrators). As I argue in the next chapter ('*An Uncivil Society*'), these three clusters permeate Lebanese civil society's efforts to address war and violence since even before the end of the Civil War in 1990. They constituted the main domains of concern and action within the early anti-war movement and are echoed – albeit not equally - within the more recently developed field of peace professionalism. Yet, as my brief historical account of these efforts highlights, the issues have been addressed with varying degrees of success. There was very little success in achieving accountability of perpetrators, or in bringing about any kind of satisfactory prevention of violence. Instead, given the state's unwillingness to intervene in post-war memories (reflected in the General Amnesty Law), many peace NGOs were given free hand to act in the direction of reconciliation. Yet, this kind of involvement occurred

mainly through the widespread application of the imported institution of the 'conflict resolution workshop'.

The 'Responding to Crisis Conference' in the spacious UNESCO palace in Beirut followed this trend. For sure, the turnout was way below the expectations of the facilitators. Out of the 400 civil society organizations invited, hardly fifty to one hundred individuals attended throughout the entire first day. At the beginning, the participants had the chance to watch a statistical overview of the victims of violence during the May Events, which was the outcome of a survey undertaken by the Lebanese charter of *Human Rights Watch*. Most crucially though, they partook in a number of workshops, which were facilitated by employees of peace NGOs.

The Workshop: Disciplinary Peace and an 'Uncivil Society'

In the workshops, participants were asked to express their opinions about and their feelings during the events. In particular, they were motivated to talk about the 'values' that were shattered and to give their own definition of "what happened2.[95] Instead of action-oriented discussion in the collaborative workshops, the atmosphere and the overall approach of the facilitators (among them was Bassim, whom we met further above) echoed the logic of the survey, which was circulated some days beforehand to diverse recipients. A questionnaire for the survey (s. fig. 3.7) was attached to the email-invitation.

Basically, this method was announced as a way to "gather background information on (people's) response to the recent events". The results of the survey would be presented anonymously at the conference in the UNESCO palace. The survey consists of five basic questions, the projected

[95] It is telling that when the participants were asked about the values that they believe they were shattered during the clashes, an American NGO worker was surpised that none of them referred to anything about the impact on 'democracy': "I was sure that people would say that democracy was injured, everyone was bothered with something else though, nobody referred to that".

replies to which, however, are given dispropotionate attention.

Survey

1. Where you able to pursue work/respond during the events/break out of violence on May 7-14, 2008?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. If Yes how? Please specify _____

3. If no, what limited your response to these events?

☐ Didn't know how to respond
☐ Fear for safety
☐ Lack of information
☐ Lack of human resources
☐ Lack of coordination with other NGO's to respond effectively
☐ Lack of financial resources
☐ Not my responsibility, out of my mandate
☐ Lack of capacity to mobilize resources

4. Do you think that we, Lebanese NGOs and activists, currently have the capacity to prevent similar events from occurring in the future?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. If yes, what do you think can be can or should be done? _____

Figure 3.7 "Survey: Lebanese Civil Society Responding to Crisis"

Source: Author's archive

Thus, the survey starts off by assessing the (in)ability to respond during the outbreak of violence. The question posed is the following: "Where (sic!) you able to pursue work/respond during the

events/outbreak of violence on May 7-14 2008?". While no further explanation is given by what is understood under 'response' (assuming that 'pursuing work' is more comprehensible), the anticipated replies can be either negative (*no*) or positive (*yes*). The next question builds upon a possible positive answer to the first question. Arguably, it is posed in such a way, i.e. as an open question, that can be said to regard possible responses as either unclassifiable to given patterns, or not very central to the aims of the survey.

This is clearly demonstrated if we juxtapose this to the ways in which the third question is organized, which anticipates a negative response to the first question. The question is focusing on the possible reasons for a limited response to the Events. Here, we have an elaborate demonstration of possible answers, from which the participants may select by ticking the box next to each. Among the eight proposed replies, one cannot fail to notice the emphasis (it appears five times) placed on the assumed 'lack' of a given element (coordination, information, resources, capacity) as the major cause for the inability to respond. This image of a civil society as 'lacking' basic elements in its efforts to respond to crisis is further highlighted by the limited space that is provided for the last question of the survey, which refers to the possibilities of action on behalf of the civil society in the future. However, this is not exceptional. On the contrary, it seems to correspond to an emerging configuration among civil society activists, and peace NGOs, in Lebanon, that tends to depict the local 'civil society' as crucially deficient, which has to be disciplined and trained in conflict resolution workshops.[96]

As a result, by the end of the first decade of 2000, the practice of the workshop in conflict resolution formed the bedrock of the activities of peace NGOs in Lebanon. It came to be depicted as the chief solution to diverse challenges to the moral and social order posed by political violence and (para-) state repression. The new configuration was premised on two basic features: First, the appropriation of technical *skills*, mostly associated with the new discipline of *conflict resolution*; Second, the acquisition of certain *moral values*, the successful outcome of which had

[96] To be fair, among peace NGO members in Lebanon, there is hardly consensus on the outcome of past efforts. For example, an American working for a Lebanese NGO openly expressed her disappointment after the May Events: "All we do throughout the years can disappear within hours, as soon as the first bullet is shot". Yet, some of her colleagues immediately disagreed and regarded the outburst of violence as the greatest confirmation that they are 'on the right track'. They insisted that events such as those in May should only make them work harder on peacemaking (Fieldwork diary).

to be manifested through ritualized, public testimonies of pain and mutual forgiveness that often took place within these workshops (See next chapter for more).

In Washington and Brussels, 'A Coup d' État'

The *International Crisis Group* (henceforth *ICG*) and the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* (henceforth *Carnegie*) are the world's two leading *peace think tanks* today. According to their own descriptions, ICG is "an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation committed to preventing and resolving deadly conflict" and Carnegie is "a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing cooperation between nations and promoting active international engagement by the United States".[97]

These self-declared 'global think tanks' are headquartered in Brussels and Washington D.C respectively. Their global outreach is organized through the maintenance of '130 permanent staff worldwide' (ICG), or through the running of country offices in major regional capitals such as Wahsington D.C., Brussels, Beijing, Moscow, and Beirut (Carnegie). Carnegie's branch office in Beirut is located within walking distance from the National Parliament, which incorporates the aim of influencing policy-making at the top.

The major tool through which both ICG and Carnegie pursue their aims towards influencing policy-making and advocating recommendations for the resolution of conflicts worldwide is what they both call "expert analysis of conflict situations". Thus, ICG's website proudly claims that the organization publishes "around 80 reports and briefings annually", while it has already published "over 90 issues of the monthly *CrisisWatch* bulletin since 2003" and "over 1,000 full-length reports and briefings published since 1995" (ibid.). In a similar vein, Carnegie claims to publish "original analysis by leading experts from around the world." Carnegie's "non-partisan research" targets policy makers, government officials, academics, and business readers. Publication formats

[97] See their websites: www.crisisgroup.org and http://carnegieendowment.org/about/.

include “policy briefs, reports, Carnegie papers, and books addressing a wide range of issues” (ibid.).

Needless to say, both ICG and Carnegie made sure to publish *reports* containing expert analysis on a typical confict situation such as the May Events as soon as possible. Carnegie was considerably faster: amidst the gunfire, Carnegie’s Beirut Office Director Paul Salem circulated a web commentary (see below), titled “Hizbollah Attempts a Coup d’ État” (Salem 2008).


CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT
FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

Web Commentary

Middle East Program May 2008

Hizbollah Attempts a Coup d’État

By Paul Salem

Figure 3.8 “Hizbollah Attempts a Coup d’ État” Carnegie Web Commentary

Source: Author’s archive

Not longer than three A4 pages, the report is nevertheless worth exploring. Having said that, I must add that I am not interested in analyzing the content of the report in order to examine, for example, whether, and to what extent, its claims correspond to a given ‘reality’. I am not even concerned with the question of how realistic the analysis and the predictions for the future are. In brief, I do not examine the report within the framework of crisis and response, and thus, from the perspective of its normative claims. I am mostly looking at the think tank report as a *technology of power* and, thus, I am interested in discerning those particular techno-political elements that constitute it as such. I take up this challenge more fully in Chapter Five, where the think tank report is contextualized within the global politics of a new field of knowledge permeated by a prevailing logic of circulated. For my purposes now, I focus exclusively on the above-mentioned think tank reports, which are directly related to the May Events. The rationale behind this choice is to provide a comparative framework within which the diverse array of political technologies of peacemaking may be analyzed in a given historical moment.

The *Carnegie Web Commentary* is worth taking up first, because it is less complex than *ICG's Policy Briefing* in the ways that it chose to position itself vis-à-vis the May Events. The author was confident enough to suggest a clear definition of the 'conflict situation': The Events must be understood as (an attempt for) a *coup d' état* by *Hizbullah*. This sentence, I submit, encapsulates the overall élan of the report. Thus, not only the analysis focuses heavily on Hizbullah by attempting to discern the latter's strategy, mindset and broader goals. Moreover, this is provided from the perspective of the *state*, and not from an alleged neutral standpoint of an external observer. Beyond the attempt to define the conflict situation (which is not to be underestimated, yet – I argue – think tanks do not possess effective definitional powers), the report is grounded on the logic of *revelation*. It is constructed as an attempt to reveal what is supposedly well hidden behind the actors' actions: namely the *broader goals* and the *real stakes* of the conflict. Although the report nominally addresses the reasons behind the actions of both feuding parties (government and opposition in this case), the bulk of the report's speculations is decisively dedicated to the "immediate" and "broader goals" of what the report sees as the coalition between Hizbullah, Amal and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The following characteristic excerpts from the report illustrate this:

> Hizbollah's immediate goals are clear: to break the authority of the March 14 government, forcing it to rescind the two controversial decisions, and to bring about the establishment of a new national unity government in which the opposition has a significant say.. (…)
>
> But Hizbollah and Amal, as leading representatives of the Shi'i community, may also have broader goals. There is widespread speculation that they might demand a re-opening of the 1989 Taif Agreement, which regulates the distribution of power among sectarian groups, and insist on a larger share of power for the Shi'a. (…)
>
> There has been much speculation as to what has shifted in the Iranian position such that it encouraged, or at least, allowed Hizbollah to unleash its military advantage at this time. It could be a response to the latest round of sanctions against Iran that the United States has

sponsored in the Security Council, U.S. accusations of Iranian interference in Iraq, and/or the campaign against Muqtada al-Sadr and the Mahdi Army. It could also reflect an Iranian concern that if Syria goes down the road of peace with Israel over the Golan Heights, as it has tried to do by enlisting Turkish mediation, Hizbollah could be weakened; thus Hizbollah needed to unseat the current pro-Western government and regain access to the airport and sea ports of the Lebanese state in order to avoid being strangled if Syria made peace with Israel. (ibid.)

On May 15, the *International Crisis Group* followed suit and published a *Policy Briefing* (Middle East Briefing no. 23) titled 'Lebanon: Hizbollah's Weapons Turn Inward' (International Crisis Group 2008).[98]

Policy Briefing

Middle East Briefing N°23
Beirut/Brussels, 15 May 2008

International Crisis Group
WORKING TO PREVENT CONFLICT WORLDWIDE

Lebanon: Hizbollah's Weapons Turn Inward

I. OVERVIEW

Hizbollah's takeover of much of West Beirut began as a cost-of-living strike on 7 May 2008. Yet the course of events, their speed and ultimately violent turn exposed the true stakes. For almost four years, Lebanon has been in a crisis alternatively revolving around the government's composition, its program, the international tribunal investigating Rafiq al-Hariri's assassination, the choice of a new president and the electoral law. All attempts at peaceful resolution having failed, it has reverted, more dangerously than ever, to its origins: an existential struggle over Hizbollah's arms. The government's 14 May decision to reverse the measures – removal of the airport security chief and questioning Hizbollah's parallel telephone system, a key part of its military apparatus, precipitated the cri-

wildered, stunned by its inability to resist Hizbollah's three-day takeover and angry at a leadership accused of letting it down. Pressure on the heads of the Future Movement to bolster its military capacity will grow; simultaneously, some militants will be drawn to more radical, possibly jihadi movements. Its other allies, notably Walid Jumblatt, the Druze leader, appear demoralised and defeated. The army, too, has been damaged, unable to restrain the opposition and harshly criticised by the ruling March 14 coalition as well as many ordinary Sunnis. The risks of an escalating sectarian conflict are real and dangerous.

By withdrawing its decisions, the government has helped calm the situation. But a threshold has been crossed, and it will be very hard to turn back the clock. To minimise the risks of a more dangerous conflagration, renewed efforts pursuant to the Arab League agreement are needed to settle on a new

Figure 3.9 "Hizbollah's Weapons Turns Inward" ICG Policy Briefing

Source: Author's archive

Contrary to the Carnegie report, the *ICG Briefing* did not try to pre-empt a clear-cut definition of the May Events. Instead, it chose a rather balanced narrative, in which the author often relied entirely on quoted opinions of representatives on both sides of the conflict. The debate over the facts is treated, for example, through the meticulous reference to differing opinions from many

[98] When I met the author some days later, he admitted that this report «was the fastest written ICG report in the history of the group in the Middle East..." When I asked him about the title, he revealed to me that he had to change it twice. 'At the beginning I had this one, but then I thought its too provocative so I put something else, like "Hezbullah in West Beirut". But then I asked them (i.e. Hezbullah) and they said that even the first title is OK, so I chose the first one".'

protagonists themselves. The author carefully navigates through the quotations, trying to keep a safe distance from all. Or, at least, this is the communicated intention, because it seems that the report's core argument, namely that the May Events revealed Hizbullah to be a sectarian movement ready to use its weapons in the internal front, is simultaneously identified by the same report as the government's "powerful argument"! Here is the quote:

> Finally, although Hizbollah won the military battle, the government has not been entirely weakened. It not only remained in place, but also now has at its disposal powerful arguments against the opposition in general and Hizbollah in particular. It is in a position to discredit the Shiite movement's demands by depicting it as a dangerous sectarian militia that violated its oft-repeated commitment never to turn its weapons inward. (ICG 2008:6)

I do not suggest a conspiracy here. I rather propose that we explain this concurrence between ICG's 'analysis' and the government's 'argument' as the result of the former's inherent state-centric perspective. Despite the effort to pose as a neutral observer of external events, the conceptual logic of the peace think tank is unambiguously linked to the surveillance of the state's Other, namely of those entities that either do not fulfil the formal criteria of a liberal, democratic, and Western state, or that are declared terrorist and dangerous by the same states. This, I say again, should not be read as an outcome of a strategic coalition of interests, or of covert agreements over the fate of Lebanon. As I argue in chapter Five, this logic of surveillance is deployed through the activation of a number of relevant rationalities and technologies within the globalized regime of security and anti-terrorism. For example, the conceptual and epistemological frameworks of *radicalization* and *culturalization* feature widely as two of the main tenets of this post-9/11 regime. Thus, scholars are often looking at global conflicts through the given filters of so-called 'non-state actors', which are perceived to be dangerously radicalized and to derive legitimacy among their constituencies through the exploitation of ethnic, sectarian or other 'cultural' sentiments (religion, ethnicity, sect, race etc.).

Both these tenets appear overwhemingly in the ICG report. First, the report makes a strong argument for the further consolidation of sectarian identities as a result of the May violence. Yet, it does so while it adopts at the same time the phenomenon of sectarianization as given. In fact, it is often very difficult to differentiate between the depiction of sectarian sentiments of the parties involved and the expert's own analysis of the situation. This is because the latter heavily draws on the sectarian narrative too, as a small selection of quotes shows:

> "The fighting pitted Hizbollah's and Amal's Shiite militias against Sunnis." p.2

> "Insofar as one side was virtually entirely Shiite and the other almost wholly Sunni,31 the fighting became intrinsically sectarian…" p.5

> "At this writing (…) Shiite militias continued to control much of West Beirut and man checkpoints in its Sunni or mixed neighborhoods." p.7

Second, the report puts forward equally strongly the claim of possible further radicalization as a direct outcome of the "deep scars" that the May Events left behind. Throughout the text, we are often reminded of the risk of "growing militancy among Sunnis", which may lead to "individual violence" and "spontaneous acts of collective revenge" (ibid. 6). Hence, one more potential 'unruly object' is clearly identified, i.e. the 'radical jihadi current' among Sunnis:

> "Over time, (growing militancy) could strengthen the radical jihadi current which is staking its ground as the most determined Shiite adversary and one intent on ensuring the community's self-defence." p. 6

To be fair, these claims are often supported by "evidence", which is presented in the form of views and opinions of the actors involved. For instance, the above claim towards radicalization of the Sunni community is said to be evidenced "by several Islamist and Salafist leaders in Tripoli and Beirut, as well as by members of the opposition."

Finally, the *ICG Briefing* openly shares the declared aim of the *Carnegie Commentary*, namely, the task of revealing the "true stakes behind the May Events" (ibid. p.1). The question of

Hizbullah's "goal" seems to be equally central here, albeit treated in a slightly different way. The interpretation suggested is carefully supported by reference to reliable sources:

> "A well-informed opposition member said that: Hizbollah's fighters entered into Beirut because a red line had been crossed. Indeed, this was the first time a concrete measure was taken against the resistance, and this happened after several warnings were sent to the government, before and even during the fateful council of ministers meeting." (ibid. p.4)
>
> And again:
>
> "According to a well informed opposition member, Hizbollah's actions were aimed exclusively at protecting the resistance and would end as soon as the government met its core demands: withdrawal of the two ministerial decisions and a return to the negotiating table." (ibid. p.4)

Contrary to the personal opinion style of the Carnegie Commentary, the ICG briefing relies heavily on references and quotations by other sources. Reminiscent of Latour's argument about the strength that inter-reference conveys to the truth-making claims of a given text, the ICG report boasts of not less than 52 references in a 8-pages-long document.

The Think Tank Report: Actuarial Peace and the 'Unruly Other'

As we saw, both reports focus almost explicitly on Hizbullah and its allies (Amal, Iran), and on other designated as 'unruly' and potentially 'radical' entities, such as the jihadi Islamists. Differences in style and argumentation notwithstanding, peace think tank reports seek to provide expert analysis, at the main core of which lies the exposure of the goals of the recalcitrant entities. Arguably, they constitute a form of political technology that is premised on the promise of providing evidence-based insights on political entities that –due to their unruliness and

inacessability - cannot be easily assessed and analyzed by conventional means, such as the academic political science, for example, who may also be too slow to react to crises and the immediate need for reliable information, as many think tank experts told me. In this capacity, I argue that a peace think tank report constitutes an *actuarial device*, in the sense of Hacking (Hacking 1991), namely a device of surveillance of the Other of the state, the 'non-state actor'. As we will see in Chapter Five, within the post 9/11 regime of security and anti-terrorism, most of these political entities are described with the generic term 'non-state actors', if not 'terrorist groups'.

Think tank reports thus emerge as devices of surveillance and illumination within the complex landscape of the post-9/11 security regime. Suspect socio-political entities are increasingly depicted as culturalized and essentialized versions of radical Otherness, which can be neither peacefully approached (due to radicalism), nor culturally comprehended (due to Otherness). It is this middle and occult space of unintelligibility that think tank reports help both to construct and illucidate at the same time. This is also why peace think tanks also understand themselves as important intermediaries between 'the international community' and the 'terrorists'. This is why they proudly announce that they "speak with everyone" (ICG staff, New York, interview October 2011). Yet, despite declarations such as the above, and conscious efforts to couch the analysis in terms of neutrality and objectivity, the reports speak indeed to a very specific audience, namely, different kinds of experts who are either based in, or stem from mainly the West (journalists, politicians, diplomats, social and political scientists etc.). As such, the reports seek to constitute the perceived 'missing link' between the policy makers in various Western capitals (Washington, London, Brussels, Paris etc.), and the local situation.

Conclusion: A Schematic Grid of the Power to Pacify

Taking as its empirical point of entry the so-called May Events that shook Lebanon in 2008, this chapter argues the aftermath of the Events made manifest a new configuration of power that is organized around the aim of pacifying Lebanon. This approach cautions against an understanding of peacemaking in either normative or functionalist terms. On the contrary, it suggests that peacemaking in Lebanon might be analyzed as a topology of political technologies and that taken all together constitute a very particular grid of power. This power is insofar productive, because it constitutes and puts in place a hosts of new elements, such as new kinds of objects, new types of knowledge, and new types of expertise. This chapter was thus designed to provide an overview of this complex grid of power.

In order to do so, I suggested a particular typology of the different types of the power to pacify. Thus, what I suggested to call the *Hobbesian peace* is the type of power, which is mainly constituted through those heterogeneous elements that take up the Hobbesian notion of sovereignty as primary object. Thus, peacemaking practices at the top of the echelons of power, such as the summit, together with particular knowledge domains, such as the summitry and technicalized readings of dialogue, as well as expert figures, such as the mediator, are crucial aspects of this kind of power.

Second, I porpose to call Holocaustian that type of the power to pacify that is primarily concerned with both the establishment of scientific facts concerning crimes against humanity, as well as the principal ways through which the Head of the United Nations might choose to react vis-à-vis the previously established facts. Thus, the Holocaustian peace is immensely concerned with documents as fact-establishing elements. I argued that in order for them to appear so the documents must retain some features, such as a rhetoric of authority, an aesthetic of factuality and an ability to eliminate disputes over the fact-finding processes. In one sense, this kind of the power to pacify is concerned with the establishment of truth as well as with possible universal ways to act upon it.

Third, I proposed to name *disciplinary* and *acturial* these kinds of the power to pacify that are concerned with the aim of fixing (either through discipline or through surveillance respectively) certain objects. In the first case, the disciplinary peace is constituted as that assemblage of elements that aim to train and educate a potentially 'uncivil society'. In the second case, the actuarial peace is organized around the aim of placing under diverse forms of surveillance those recalcitrant political entities that cannot be approached through other political processes, such as formal diplomatic means for example. In the next two chapters, I focus on these two types in an effort to provide both an account of their historical emergence and of their contemporary function as political technologies.

POWER TO PACIFY	**MAIN PRACTICE**	**KNOWLEDGE TYPE**	**EXPERT TYPE**	**OBJECT**
HOBBESIAN	SUMMIT	DIALOGUE	MEDIATORS	SOVEREIGNTY
HOLOCAUSTIAN	OFFICIAL DOCUMENT	RESOLUTIONS, CANONICAL TEXTS	UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL	FACTS
DISCIPLINARY	WORKSHOP	CONFLICT RESOLUTION	PEACE NGOS	UNCIVIL SOCIETY
ACTUARIAL	THINK TANK REPORT	SECURITY LITERATURE	PEACE THINK TANKS	UNRULY OTHER

Table 3.3 A schematic grid of the power to pacify in Lebanon, May 2008

Chapter Four An 'Un-Civil Society'

Peace NGOs and the Rise of the Conflict Resolution Workshop

The people (ahali) were seduced by corruption
and did not listen to the "advice of the wise ones" (al uqula)
Ottoman firman 1860
(Quoted in Makdissi 2000, p.71-72)

Introduction

"Sitting comfortably on the terrace of Beirut's luxurious *Mövenpick Hotel & Spa*, on a warm, sunny afternoon, and overlooking the calm Mediterranean sea, *Paul Najjar* looked content and excited. His project for this year, the *Summer School on Conflict Resolution*, couldn't have had a better kick-off. On the workshop's second day, one of the participants sat in the middle of the circle and told everybody the story of his own father, who had been kidnapped some months ago. The participant described how he had also been kidnapped and tortured by the "*mukhabarrat*" (ar. secret police), when he ventured to the local police station to ask about his father's fate. The story made it onto the news, producing "many interesting articles", Paul tells me, sipping on his cappuccino: "The *mukhabarrat* came to him and beat him. This was the beginning of the article in the French-speaking newspaper *L' Orient du Jour*. I attended this session, usually I don't say anything, but after this session Judith (the trainer) asked me to say something. (What I said) was about the culture of submission; it begins from school, from the family (...) After (the participant's testimony), we had a very important discussion. It was very important for me during this summer school not only to deal with techniques related to conflict; the first three days we had many techniques: Dialogue, negotiation, mediation, communication, they took these techniques, but it's not only the techniques.. I think with Judith we begun to discuss the *why*? And when we see injustice, what we can do? From this we can open to the conflict, it is an important connection."

Field notes from "Interview with Paul Najjar", Beirut Summer 2008

In this chapter, I examine the role of peace expertise in the development of a new technical-ethical configuration that has made the 'workshop in conflict resolution' the dominant means of peace NGOs in their attempts to address past injustices inflicted on citizens by state and para-state agencies (militias, secret services etc.) in Lebanon. I explore the effects of this development on the efforts to build a new post-Civil War society, which were often geared towards the training of the population in the *skills* and *values* of a particular understanding of peace. I argue that these efforts, aimed at producing subjects endowed with certain technical-ethical capacities of peace, i.e. *citizens-civilians* respectively, had at least three, sometimes unintended, effects: First, a gradual shift in the ways and aims around which the anti-war movement in Lebanon was organized. One of these is what I call the *de-juridification of politics*, i.e. a turn away from the legal field as a primary site for seeking justice against past state repression, or protection against future ones; Second, the consistent construction of a perception of an 'uncivil society,' that is, a politically backward and potentially violent population, which has to be trained in both *citizenship* and *civility*. Third, the (re-)production of a professionalized field of *peacemaking NGOs*, whose degree of legitimacy and conditions of institutional existence crucially depended on the constant need to reiterate the binary between an *uncivil society* and themselves.

My material speaks to the ongoing debate in anthropology, and in the social sciences, on the role of 'civil society' in promoting peace and democracy. However, instead of taking the notion of civil society as an analytical tool to be applied *to* my research field, i.e. peace expertise in Lebanon, I seek to invert the perspective. I chose instead to see the 'civil society' as an ethnographic object *in its historical and institutional making* through the practices of peace expertise. I explore the ways through which peace experts produce a particular discourse, and a set of practices, that comes to bear upon the definition of 'civil society.' I use a historical-ethnographic perspective to explore, for example, the transformation of early peace activism into what one could term 'peace professionalism'

in the late 1990's; How did this change affect the ways in which the notion of 'civil society' was understood among NGO members? I argue that, during the first years, the term's understanding could be said to have been closer to current academic definitions of civil society as a space beyond - and often in opposition to - the *state*; and as the primary locus of popular mass mobilization, as well as of the articulation of demands for justice and social protection addressed to those wielding political power. Yet, the rise of a new techno-ethical configuration of peace-making shifted the focus of NGO efforts almost exclusively towards the (training of the) population. Two decades later, the population itself has become the target of intervention by experts, whose techniques and practices are set to create a 'civil society' in both a technical and an ethical sense, i.e. as the sum of *citizens* and of *civilians* respectively. Hence, *the citizen* is now understood as the member of the population that has undergone training in a particular set of *skills,* such as negotiation techniques, dialogue forms, etc.; the *civilian* was perceived as the member of the population that has been infused with a particular set of *values,* such as (liberal) tolerance, (multicultural) understanding, (cosmopolitan) belonging, etc. This corresponded with a new understanding of *civil society*, as a body inherently *uncivil* that had to be made *civil*. Thus, *the civil* was now perceived in a normative and moralizing sense.

I began this chapter with Paul's depiction of the workshop in order to introduce a principal tension, which I often observed during my fieldwork. On the one hand, the *big questions*: the (non-) institutionalized memory and the judicial handling of the crimes of the war, the ongoing trauma of the families of the 'Disappeared,' the pervasive injustice and inequality, as well as the causes and the effects of endemic violence that often revive comparisons to the War. These questions, Paul hopes, may allow the discussion to "open to the conflict". On the other hand, the *techniques* of conflict resolution: *mediation*, *negotiation*, and *dialogue*, which the workshop participants had "taken", as Paul notes. Yet, Paul's overtly optimistic excitement at what he regards as the workshop's "success" reflects both the pressing anticipation to address these questions, as well as the shaky confidence that it can be done without relying on the techniques. This is a recurrent stance among activists and NGO members in Lebanon, which nevertheless leads often to frustrations. More often than not, the

techniques are prioritized over the *questions*. As a result, widespread anticipations often turn to endless exasperations.

In this chapter, I am exploring how this happens.

To be sure, my fieldwork highlights a striking imbalance between the importance granted the *techniques* over the *questions* within the workshop. I argue that this uncomfortable and unbalanced co-existence is the constant source of tension. I regard this tension as the primary product of multiple efforts to reconcile essentially de-politicized forms of expertise with highly political and legal claims for social justice, and the need to deal with historical memory. Early on in my fieldwork, I noted how hope and frustration co-exist among many social activists and peace NGO members in Lebanon. Later on, I became aware of their agonistic efforts to position themselves, or - more accurately - to adjust their discourse and practice in accordance with an emerging conception of peace making. The new perception was premised on two basic features: First, the appropriation of technical *skills*, mostly associated with the new discipline of conflict resolution: second, the proliferation of certain *values*, that had to be manifested through ritualized, public testimonies of pain and mutual understanding. However, I also noted the resistance that such efforts were met with, which involved a critical, and often, cynical stance. I observed participants in conflict resolution workshops openly questioning, or even mocking some trainers' de-contextualized and a-historical discourses on political violence, social justice, human rights, or international law. At other times, participants refused to accept the images and narratives of (self-) victimization altogether, which they saw as being imported from a moral universe that had nothing to do with their own. Thus, they insisted on rejecting a morality that was arbitrarily associated with particular notions of civility. The critique, and even the hostility, of the participants to many of the imported forms, as well as the techniques and the substance imparted to them was a standard tenet in my fieldwork. But many of the experts themselves, some of whom became close friends during the course of my fieldwork, would often reveal to me their profound doubts about, and lack of faith in, the very practices they preached.

Despite criticism and doubt, by the end of the first decade of 2000, the practice of the 'workshop in conflict resolution' formed the bedrock of peace expertise in Lebanon. The workshop formed not only its principal mechanism of service-delivery, but also the only form that was imbued with legitimacy. The ubiquitous workshop became the main focus of most NGO documents. It came to be depicted as the chief solution to challenges to the moral and social order posed by political violence and (para-) state repression. As I have argued in previous chapters, such challenges were often described with the help of a widely circulating 'crisis imaginary.' With significant foreign funds and training courses flowing into the field by western-based NGOs and universities specialized in peacemaking and conflict resolution, the workshop thus became an ideal springboard for a promising career in a new professionalized field of expertise.

Hence, my interest here is in the historical development, as well as in the contemporary applications, of the practice of the workshop as a means of producing *subjects* of peacefulness as well as reproducing *experts* in peacemaking. The ethnographic discovery of this double condition opens up a series of new questions, only some of which I can explore here. One could examine the means through which the distinctive division between subjects and experts, between citizen/civilian and peace expert in particular, is constituted and maintained. Or whether, for example, a public testimony of self-victimization, such as the one presented at the opening of the chapter, serves as a means of demonstrating an ethical, embodied experience that constitutes a case of Foucauldian subject formation, similar to that of AIDS patients in West Africa, as analyzed by Nguyen (Nguyen 2010). Or analyze the technical and de-contextualized nature of techniques such as dialogue, mediation, negotiation, etc. as an 'anti-politics machine' (Ferguson 1990). Or investigate the shifts in governance modalities by studying the evaluation of expertise in terms of new schemes and logics, which do not rely any longer on the achievement of *peace* in the country. Instead, it is merely a 'performance indicator', in which the number of people that have undergone training substitutes for, and serve as, the measure of goal achievement, as Randeria shows in the case of the USAID-funded SIFSPA programme to reduce fertility in northern India (forthcoming). Thus, what experts often regard as success is linked to self-referential criteria rather than to society's wider goals.

My main concern, however, lies with exploring the effects of those expert practices on the ways in which particular notions, such as peace and civil society, are re-configured and, ultimately, re-defined. Thus, the main question that I pose is the following: If the technical-ethical configuration that was developed within the emerging field of peace expertise in Lebanon sought to produce new subjects (in the form of civilians-citizens), and, indeed, brought about new sorts of experts (NGOs in peace and conflict resolution), how did these developments shape new notions of *civil society* and of *peace*? My argument has both a historical and a theoretical part.

The historical argument suggests that the expert field of conflict resolution sought to institutionalize itself as a depoliticized answer to the urgent, complex and highly political questions about past war crimes, continuous state repression, and social (in)justice. These questions were reflected in diverse socio-political struggles over the past 30 years. Based on personal narratives and institutional archives, I show that conflict resolution has historically evolved from a single tool among many of the anti-war movements in the late 80's, to a professional field in its own right by the end of the 2000s. This could also be described as a process of *technicalization,* and of *de-politicization*, as manifested in the perception that conflict resolution as a method is adequate for resolving all kinds of conflicts from interpersonal to international. However, this process was extremely political in another sense. It was accompanied and strengthened by elements of professionalization and internationalization, which brought with it specific values and concrete social relations (e.g. funding). It propagated and cemented the binary image of the technically superior and morally elevated peace expert, and the (potentially uncivil and violent) citizen-civilian in need of education. Other voices, choices and agendas (such as the focus on war tribunals, popular and social justice; solidarity as value; war memory as field of social engagement, etc.) were thus either eclipsed or silenced.

The theoretical part of my argument addresses the emergence of a new technical-ethical configuration as an integral part of the establishment of a transnational expertise in peace-making. This development had important consequences for the transformations in understandings of civil society and peace. Thus, during the last years of the Lebanese civil war, and its immediate aftermath,

peace was, for the most part, articulated as a *Kampfbegriff* on the part of a 'civil society' engaged in struggles against the political power-holders. Civil society efforts were directed at assigning accountability, and demands to hold the political class responsible for the civil war as a collective crime against the Lebanese society. In this sense, peace was used as an alternative trope for social and popular justice, inherently linked to the rule of law and to the idea of a 'civil society' premised on the political claims of rights-bearing subjects. In this understanding of the role of civil society, the judicial arena - in the form of a war tribunal, for example, – had an essential place and an important role to play.

Two decades later, the courtroom, as the desired locus of popular mobilization for peace and justice, has given way to the workshop as the primary site for the training of the population. One could say that many Lebanese people wanted a war tribunal, but they got the workshop instead. This phenomenon, I argue, evidences that processes of 'juridification of politics', on the rise in places such as South Africa or India (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006; Randeria and Grunder 2011), are clearly losing ground in Lebanon. Rather, we are witnessing processes of the *de-juridification of politics* in which judicial paths for civil society's claims are blocked, ignored or rendered irrelevant under the influence of a de-politicized and de-politicizing peace expertise. So what we seem to have is a shift from a high degree of politicization, with demands for juridification, to a NGO-ization with foreign funding and professional expertise. Constituted as a fully-fledged professionalized field, peacemaking has come to be largely identified with the task of training and educating the very same population that, only a couple of decades earlier, was seen as the legitimate source of political demands. I contend that an analysis of the emergence of a new technical-ethical configuration of peace expertise is crucial to an understanding of processes of de-juridification of politics in Lebanon.

The chance to participate in a global community of select experts, and pursue international careers premised on easy mobility without visa problems and travel restrictions, came at a price. Lebanese peace experts found themselves reproducing an essentialist image of a principally tribal, inherently violent, and potentially 'uncivil society.' My story is primarily one of shifting definitions and emerging practices within a vibrant political society that gradually saw the reconfiguration of

demands for social justice, and just peace by actors with domestic legitimacy and credibility, into an exclusive domain of experts with international legitimacy, backing and funding.

In what follows, I focus extensively on those expert-based processes of definitional (re-) working. The chapter is divided into four main parts: First, I review the literature on the term civil society, while seeking to situate my approach within a vast body of scholarship. Second, I focus on the workshop as a site of fine-grained ethnography. I seek to understand its practices and its effects, namely, what it actually *does*. In a brief excurse, I revisit an academic debate around an important historical moment for the birth, and the global circulation, of the (tensions around the) workshop as the primary practice within the field of peace, namely the Stirling workshop in Ireland. Returning to Lebanon, I use ethnographic data to show how specific ethical and technical aspects have become essential features of the workshop today. Third, I offer a chronology of the different phases that citizens' engagement for peace underwent in Lebanon. In this section, I show, for example, how active members of the anti-war movement were handpicked by external donors to be sent abroad to study, which also paved the way for the professionalization of the field. I also focus on the different kinds of experts that were the main protagonists during these phases (activists, academics, and foreign trainers etc.). I also examine some important moments and events that can be seen as constitutive of the field. Finally, I describe the basic features of the field of conflict resolution in Lebanon based on the narratives of some of its principal actors, in an effort to demonstrate more aptly the nature and manner of the crucial shift from anti-war activism to peace professionalism.

Civil Society and its Discontents

During the last two decades there has been a lively debate within the social sciences on the role of civil society in promoting democracy, development and social peace. In the wake of the political upheavals in Eastern Europe during the 1990s, this old Hegelian notion was re-introduced in an intensive way. Ever since, it has witnessed an impressive expansion in geographical and

theoretical scope. However, the bulk of the literature still reflects an ongoing struggle over the definition of the term, as well as the questioning of its analytical clarity. The main questions posed revolve around the concept of civil society, and whether and how it helps us better understand the ways through which citizens all over the world mobilize and organize themselves for social and political causes. Indeed, proposed definitions and approaches abound. Is civil society the "domain of relationships which falls between the private realm of the family on the one hand and the state on the other" (Hann 1997, 27)? The "collective intermediary between the individual and the state" (Whaites 1996, 240)? Or merely "what stands in opposition to the state" (Hearn 2001, 340), or "a complex of influential associations which may create themselves within the framework of liberal states" (Loizos 1996, 50)?

Despite all of these efforts, there is widespread consensus that the struggle over definitions has been largely unproductive, and remains definitely unresolved. Civil society remains "a very vague and elusive term" (Abdel Rahman 2002, 22). One major problem with these efforts is the impossibility of defining the boundaries between civil society, and other forms of social organization that it is regarded to stand in opposition to, such as the state, the family, the market. Another problem that is often pointed out in the literature is that the concept has been "over theorized" to the point where its usefulness has become highly questionable (Fierlbeck 1996). Fierlbeck describes it as a political ideal that is "both descriptively brave and politically feckless" (ibid.,13). Stewart notes that the concept has been used by "many different writers to encapsulate a vast number of differing ideas, whose only linking thread is an element of 'wishful thinking', a desire for some pleasant organizing principle beyond the home (and within it if one includes feminists)" (1997, 15). The literature that attempts to correct or fine-tune the concept, in one or another way, is vast and growing.

Anthropologists have also engaged intensively with the concept in numerous ways (e.g. Coombe 1997; Hann 1997; Randeria 2006; Verdery 1996; Seligman 1995). Hearn (2001, 339) notes some of these ways, which comprise the use of the term as a tool of social analysis, as a political slogan, as a descriptive 'model of', or a Geertzian prescriptive 'model for' reality (Geertz, 1973

in Hearn 2001), or as something "simply self-evident", and adds that "we are obliged to make sense of it", not least because it is frequently on the "lips of those we encounter in our fieldwork" (ibid.). But how did anthropologists seek to make sense of such an elusive concept? Apparently, Hearn continues, with the notable exception of Ernest Gellner (1996), anthropologists have avoided the risk of giving rigid definitions to the concept, and preferred instead, context-based descriptions of symbolic and discursive aspects of "civil society". Undoubtedly, this move away from definitional fixation enabled anthropologists to focus on other themes, such as the production and maintenance of power, "whether as autonomy or dominance" (Hearn 343); the implications, and the conditions, of the expansion of the concept of civil society beyond its birthplace in the liberal West (Hearn ibid.); the ways that particular neo-liberal notions of civil society promote "marketing selves" (Junghans 2001), and on questions of subject formation in general (Khilnani 2001). Finally, Mamdani urges us to look at "actually existing civil society", which involves looking "at its actual formation, rather than as a promised agenda for change" (Mamdani 1996; Mohan 2002). Junghans suggests that the overall confusion around civil society might be "productive in its own right" (2001, 384).

Taking my cue from these two last authors, without rejecting the insights proposed by the previous ones, I suggest an inverted, empirically-informed perspective on the definition of the term. To follow Mamdani, I propose to delineate how the term is constructed in "actual formations" within discursive, and loosely institutionalized spaces, such as the expert field of peace in Lebanon. This approach not only avoids an abstraction from the context, but also follows the discursive and institutional circuits of its local usage. This occurs, for example, in situations where the term civil society is attached, or implied, in sentences that link certain notions together, such as this one: "Participation of citizens in political decision making is a core concept of functioning democracies. Civil society has therefore tremendously important roles to play within democracies" (Paffenholz and Spurk 2006, 1). Such statements, apart from the essentialist and unquestioned use of a number of problematic terms that remain largely undefined, attempt to present the notions of 'civil society,' 'citizens' and 'democracy' as almost identical. While

seeking to address the abstractness of the term, such identifications end up producing higher levels of abstractness.

There is astonishingly little reflection on exactly what the adjective *civil* does to *society* (Abdel Rahman 2002, 22–23; Chabal and Daloz 1999b, 19). It is worth asking whether it reduces, or actually negates, the abstractness of the term altogether. In a rare effort to discuss this point in historical terms, Khilnani notes that "Hegel's conception of civil society derived from the attempt to incorporate what he saw as valuable in modern natural law – above all, the conception of modern liberal individual freedoms – with a vision of moral and political life, the *Sittlichkeit* of community." (Khilnani 2001:23). Thus, the *civil* can be said to denote simultaneously a political attitude exercised by liberal individuals within a democracy, as well as a moral-ethical stance that includes non-violent forms of interaction, as it is perceived in the notion of 'civil peace', and furthermore in that of the 'civilian.' In this vein, Gellner proposes that "civil society is that diverse set of non-governmental institutions, which is strong enough to counterbalance the state, and, whilst not preventing the state from fulfilling its role of keeper of the peace and arbitrator between major interests, can nevertheless prevent the state from dominating and atomizing the rest of society." (Gellner 1996, 32). Thus, in both ethical and practical terms, the notion of civility is inherently linked to that of civil peace, which in turn is juxtaposed to 'sovereign peace,' whose chief guarantor is the state.

But if civil society is meant to comprise the sum of the citizens-civilians of a state, can there then be an *un*civil society? A look at the literature would confirm two points. First, that the antithetical form appears to be almost as catchy as the original, since there is a plethora of articles that include the term uncivil society, either in the title, or in the basic argument. The second point, however, is that most of this literature does not bother to theorize the term or even explain its use (Simpson 2002; Sampson 2003), and when it does, the term is almost always applied in a very concrete post-Hobbesian sense, that is an effort to denote phenomena within the civil society that are characterized by, say, uncivil attitudes, such as violence, racism and exclusionist politics (Hann 1997; Abdel Rahman 2002). These approaches, albeit fascinating in their efforts to

question both the normative purchase, and the illusionist politics inherent in the proliferation of the concept of civil society, stop short before posing a maybe even more interesting question, which could be the following:

If 'civil society' is not de facto characterized by values such as civility, or ideals such as democracy, who is in a position to define what a *civil* society is? Or, in other words, if we choose not to offer definitions of the term, wouldn't it be analytically more useful to explore how others seek to do so through other kinds of practices? The perspective I suggest does not seek to first define civil society, and then look at what it *does*, but to explore the practices and discourses through which the imaginary of a*n un*civil society comes into being in the first place.

The Workshop on Conflict Resolution

The Birth of the Workshop: *Stirling debates*

This research has found that the first attempts to introduce so-called 'problem-solving workshops' to local conflicts were undertaken by social psychologists at different heated regions of the Cold War. U.S-based academics attempted to introduce the practice in Cyprus (Burton 1969), Israel/Palestine (Lakin, Lomranz, and Lieberman 1969; Cohen et al. 1977), East Africa (Doob and Stevens 1969; Doob 1971; 1970), and Northern Ireland (Alevy et al. 1974; Boehringer et al. 1974; Doob and Foltz 1973; 1974) with questionable results. Indeed, in the case of the notorious *Stirling workshop* a team of social psychologists at Yale University, who intended to bring together Irish nationalists and British loyalists in a series of workshops in the Scottish town of Stirling, faced severe criticism by a team of Belfast-based social scientists, among them were social anthropologists and education specialists.

The fierce debate among the Yale psychologists and the Belfast anthropologists took place in the pages of the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (JCR, XVIII, no. 2 June 1974). The major criticism levelled against the Yale proponents of the workshop was the de-contextualized form of

intervention, which the critics saw as based on a number of faulty assumptions: “The evidence offered by Doob and Foltz to prove their case is mixed and once again is based on a combination of conversations and impressions gained during a visit to communities with whom they had virtually no contact for nine months and almost none prior to that.*”* (Boehringer et al. 1974, 268). For the critics, this attitude raised important ethical and political questions, such as the respect of the local context and the peoples’ rights as participants*:* “These are difficult questions that must be faced by anyone who seeks to create social change. Furthermore, they are political questions concerning the values that should be attached to risks and opportunities in the pursuit of political ends. Therefore, such questions must be painstakingly discussed and concrete results exhaustively analyzed. At the very least, the claims must be evaluated in the context of particular local conditions and possibilities, always, of course, with respect to people's rights to confidentiality concerning their actions.” (ibid., 269)

As could be expected, the disagreements concerned the necessity and extent of context-relevance, and of knowledge about the concrete circumstances. The Stirling critics point to a “major theoretical problem” of the organizers, namely, their persuasion that such a form of engagement could provide a useful ‘model of cooperation.’ They argue that if this form is not built on some “general theory of social innovation”, and does not “involve a detailed analysis of the political and social structures” of the area of intervention, it is quite doubtful whether this form could prove useful at all. The advocates of the workshop argue for its utility on two counts: First, they believe that if interested parties are “obliged to interact intensively” within a “relatively isolated setting”, the participants could feel “relatively detached from the reality they would improve” (Alevy et al. 1974). Second, on the belief that profound knowledge about the context is, in fact, potentially risky, since it cannot safeguard the third party from “disadvantages of the identifications it may produce” (ibid.). For the workshop supporters, the debate itself reflects differences between outsiders who have lived in Belfast over a few years and have, therefore, “developed commitments to particular groups and a particular view of the conflict”, and other outsiders who, due to their short stay, “do not share the same commitments” (ibid.).

This double line of argumentation can be said to adequately summarize the major differences of opinion between the two parties. In short, the moral, political and scientific questions raised in the context of the Stirling workshop revolve around (i) the role and the position of the third party (*mediator, scientist, expert*), and (ii) the needs, possibilities and circumstances of the participants, as these are perceived by the third party. On one side, the Yale Group believed that, in addition to the concrete gains for the participants, the workshop offered "additional clinical experience which," could "be transferred to other situations when and if the situation arises" (Doob et al. 1973, 508). This clinical perspective allowed them to proceed with the handling of the entire exercise as a scientific experiment that provided the opportunity for valuable data collection; the production of stress among the participants as a way to engage them into a "learning mood", and bring about a "painful experience which, being shared, constitutes a bond that draws them together" (ibid.); the use of psychoanalytic techniques in order to assist the recruits to learn about their behaviour in "organized groups" in a "protected setting", etc. However, the basic legitimacy of the exercise seems to have been the hope that the participants "develop projects among themselves that they then might be above to implement back in Belfast". This transfer of projects might finally contribute "a model of wider cooperation at the local level which would provide the basis for a broader social peace" (1973, 493). In other words, the practice of the workshop was crucially based on the distinction between the expert, with his scientific approach, and the educability of the recruit-participant.

The critical perspective of the Belfast social scientists sought to question both these givens. Instead of possible scientific gains, they regarded the well-being of the participants to be the first priority. Additionally, they saw the position of the scientist as morally and politically attached to the communities "with which he is associated". While the nature of this responsibility is far from given, they did expect the scientist not only to address these issues publicly, and in collaboration with the participants, but also to question her/his own role as researcher. Predating the reflexive turn in the social sciences, they criticized heavily what they called the "mandarin" attitude among many conflict researchers, which for them allowed for intervention upon the lives of ordinary

people on the basis of "insufficient theory and without regard to human cost." Through the use of "scientific language" and the "glamour of professionalism", admittance to a "dazzled community" is gained on the basis of an "asymmetrical relationship". They end up with both a scathing critique and a prognosis: "The greatest mistake an applied social scientist can make is to regard people as data. So long as this mistake is made, *further Stirlings* will occur" (Bohringer et al 1973, emphasis added).

"Further Stirlings"

The prognosis indeed materialized and the workshop expanded as a major practice within the professionalized peace field. Just like Northern Ireland, Palestine/Israel and Cyprus and other places, Lebanon became one of the major sites where "further Stirlings" were to find place. In the late 2000s, every year a considerable number of young Lebanese, Palestinians and other Arabs apply for participation in workshops organized by local and international peace NGOs, UN agencies and Lebanese university departments. These workshops have more or less similar features. Participants are chosen on the basis of an intended "cultural" diversity of the final group, as well as excellence credentials in the case of university students or mere expression of interest in the case of other groups, such as school teachers or pupils. The workshop usually includes several overnight-stays in a venue as remote as possible from urban centers or from the country altogether. The trainer's body is comprised of Lebanese, Palestinian, Arab, but also US and European, or South African, nationals. The training material encompasses a highly heterogeneous spectrum of sources, such as publications on "ethnic conflict" and "ethnic violence" by political scientists, theatre sketches and role playing, videos from aikido classes at alpine landscapes and school fights in south African schools, questionnaires on listening and problem solving skills, diagrams about the similar nature of interpersonal and interstate conflicts, as well as paraphernalia of the peacemaker such as the mirror, the shifting mat, or the peace doll (s. further below).

I contend that the debate on the Stirling workshop may serve as an essential background against which critical assessments about "further Stirlings" can be done. Albeit placed in totally different temporal-spatial settings, the issues pertaining to the practice of the workshop of conflict resolution appear to a great extent identical. Thus, I take my cue from the Stirling critics and I seek to explore two main questions. First, the particular ways through which the "mandarin attitude" is produced and sustained, especially since the experts involved in the contemporary cannot justify their exceptional position on the basis of scientific credentials, as the Yale Group did. How does then the workshop function as a device for the re-production of peace experts?

Second, I wish to go beyond the criticism of "harmfulness" and discover the often unintended effects of this form of intervention upon the participants as part of what Foucault has called the "making of the self". How does the workshop function as a device for the making of peace subjects? In what follows, I explore these main sets of questions with the help of ethnographic material, which I have classified in *ethical* and *technical* aspects.

***The Ethical*: Constructing Communities of Civility**

The trainer has just written "conflict" on the blackboard. She turns to the participants.

- What do you feel about this word?

Confusion, interests, misunderstanding, different needs, excitement, energy, war, winners, victims, exchange, violence, peace, hate, truth, interaction, empowerment, relations… The trainer writes down the words mentioned by the participants grouped around the key word "conflict".

- Let's think of some colors, some emotions… She turns around once again.

Fear, anger, revenge, depression, remorse, regret, shame, happiness.

- What about colors?

Red, blue, grey… light blue.

- Any metaphors? She insists.

I think of a volcano! Tree, two people pulling on the same thing, seed… petrol... thunderstorm…giraffe...

- And what about in terms of what is going on in Lebanon?

Sects… death… history… destroyed buildings, bombs… ignorance… crying… children crying… homeless… refugees… land… water... nationality... contrast, paradox… rights…

- Are you talking about human rights?

…revolution and resistance.. enemy… opportunity… mezze[99]… weapons… politics... and religion... ego... love… sex…

- What a list! What is this list telling us? It is an amazing list! What else is this list telling us? That conflict has many shapes? Thank you…it is multifaceted…that could be difficult to define it… if somebody came by another planet and asked what do you mean by conflict, he would be very confused… we got causes here, and symptoms… we got links with nature...words like water…who said seed? explain that...tree, explain this… who said land? Can you say something about land? Scarce resources... its not always about land, but also about values, dignity… Same like in South Africa…words: blood, violence, neck lacing… daily life…when apartheid was being dismantled… their association of conflict was death and construction…there might be times that conflict can be extremely destructive…Who said meze??? I want to know…

I meant the cultural and linguistic mosaic of Lebanon…

- Who said opportunity? I remember the Chinese definition of conflict… it can be an opportunity for change and growth!

Julia, the trainer, a white South African woman in her 50s, was struggling to make sense of the answers to her questions given by the Lebanese participants at the ToT (*Training of Trainers*) workshop in Cyprus. As a way to relate to Lebanon's conflict, she would often bring examples from South Africa, but she would rarely ask similar questions about Lebanon, apart from trivial

[99] Lebanese delicacies and appetizers.

ones, such as the meaning of *mezze*. Cyprus was chosen in order to "bring the participants into a place where they can feel far away from the conflict", the Lebanese head of the American peace NGO, which organized the workshop had told me. In a similar way, another participant justified the choice of place: "Since the trainer comes from another culture and we from yet another, it is useful to meet in a place where both of us can move away from our own cultures and communicate". This was the first time that Julia was invited to train people coming from Lebanon, or the Middle East in general, and her obvious lack of contextual knowledge on the country often made the atmosphere awkward. Her way to deal with this issue was either to openly ignore contextual comments or critical questions. She had acquired basic information about the history of the Lebanese Civil War only three days after the workshop had begun, and one day before its end, on a casual car ride around the island of Cyprus, in which I tried to tell her as much I could about Lebanon.

She is a "freelancer", who cooperates with different centers for conflict resolution mainly in South Africa, but also in Europe and the United States. She begun working in 1998, when she "needed a job". She was hired by "a Quaker" to work for a project funded by the German *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung* on "violence against children". When she joined the field, "there was no funding". "It was just a passion that overwhelmed me", she tells me. Then she began "networking", which she sees as "one of (her) assets, one of (her) strengths". Being part of a center "helped a lot, they have their own networks", but in general it is always good to "meet people", because "otherwise you are in a cocoon". For this job now in Cyprus, it was her networks in the U.S. that introduced her as a specialist in "school education in conflict resolution" to the U.S. based NGO, who had decided to return to Lebanon after almost 10 years of absence and launch a "peace building project", the bedrock of which would be the introduction of *problem-solving workshops* in schools around the country. The basic idea was to train teachers in conflict resolution.

However, the call to school directors and individual teachers was not very successful. Some of them came, but many stayed away, though the costs were covered. Instead, some young Lebanese

attended, whose dream it was to become trainers in conflict resolution themselves, such as Jean Luis. He was one of the most active participants in the workshop, and one could immediately see that he had experience in this. Indeed, this was the third workshop that Jean Luis had taken part in. In fact, this practice, namely, attending one workshop after the other, is considered, by Jean Luis, the best entryway into a very promising professional field.

Julia's method is "the focus on the self", as she tells me. Her aim is to introduce the habit of constant reflection in all the participants of the workshop. This is why a mirror is an essential part of the personal toolbox that every workshop member has to carry with him or her. In the different parts of the workshop, this focus is evident. One exercise, for example, invites the participants to take a position vis-à-vis a chair that has been placed in the middle of the room, and which has been labelled "the conflict". This seeks to make people aware of their personal positioning towards the conflict, no matter how one decides to define the latter. The next exercise is called "the conflict spectrum". In this one, people are motivated to reflect and think about whether they have a personal "conflict pattern", namely, an individual way of dealing with conflicts. For example, some may be aggressive, others more passive, few may choose to ignore it altogether. Each time, the participants are asked to describe their habits, their take, their opinion. However, there is hardly any discussion on the "findings" afterwards.

In the second part, the focus shifts from the self and involves different ways of introducing role models to the audience. People are asked to watch a series of short films that tell stories of "peaceful beings". The first is called 'The magic of conflict,' starring a white, blonde man fighting two others, dressed in an aikido uniform. In the background, high mountains can be seen, which could easily be the Alps. This background resonates with the main idea of the first part called "the nature of conflict", namely, that "years and years of conflict took the mountains to become as they are today". It is strong evidence that "conflict is nature's proprietor for change"! The art of aikido is also based on the principle of embracing conflict. It is a martial art that is "lovely linked to non-violence", as Julia notes. "A way of life as a blending of differences", Jeff

Finesilver, the aikido instructor notes. Aikido's principle is to "embrace conflict", Jeff goes on. "We have to choose a state of conflict that allows us to respond rather to react to conflict!"

Later, Julia distributed leaflets and questionnaires, in which the participants expressed their opinions about what they considered to be a "peaceful being". She then asked them to name some famous examples of those beings: *Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, Rafiq al Hariri* (Lebanon's slain prime minister and multibillionaire Saudi-Lebanese citizen). This exercise comes by custom after the participants have opened up themselves to the group and have narrated personal stories of loss and suffering due to violence, either in the Civil War, or in the years after.[100] Julia herself has experienced suffering, too. I feel somehow that she means that this is a necessary condition to be a good trainer; she replies telling me that a good trainer is the one who can link the personal with the professional, however, I feel that, for her, it is important to have a share in suffering. Indeed, without being asked, only minutes later, she goes on to tell me that she feels very often "vulnerable". She recalls the story of the guy who stabbed her mother-in-law in the prison, and how many people from her community did not understand how she could continue trying to reconcile the communities after such a crime. She went on experiencing "incredible levels of pain", her elder son having died, and her younger one having been stabbed. "These incredible levels of pain make credible persons to do this", she says about the training. "We teach on a heart level", she concludes.

Public testimonies of suffering are a regular part of workshops on conflict resolution. In fact, it can be said that the passive experience of violence and the subsequent pain inflicted upon the individual constitute the common language among the participants. It occurred to me that Julia did not need to know more about Lebanon to teach the Lebanese about their conflict; she already knew enough about human suffering; she had been through incredible pain; to connect with her students she did not need any other context, but the context of shared suffering. Equally, the public confession that one has undergone pain and suffering functions as that which creates the

[100] The opening question in many conflict resolution workshops I have attended is the following: "How have you personally been affected by the conflict in the M.E. or in your own community?"

bond among the participants, too. This form of bonding is peculiar because it is based on both humanitarian, as well as individualistic principles; this form of confession is peculiar because it seeks to denounce the perpetrator, and to forgive the crime at the same time; this form of testimony is peculiar because it elevates the person morally after having forced her to admit having undergone pain.

It is indeed difficult not to discern the Christian values of confession in these rituals. A peace expert, who regularly attended the workshops, also remarked on this. The participants, old fighters in the war from both sides, Christian and Druze, were asked to tell their stories of war. My friend, himself a Druze, was shocked by the ease and tremendous self-pity with which the Christians would describe the crimes inflicted upon them. The Druzes, by contrast, would simply refuse to talk about the war and the crimes of either side, believing that crimes are part of every war, and, therefore, are neither worth mentioning nor atoning for. In my discussions with him, we concluded that the effect of this confession on the part of the Christians was to simultaneously achieve a level of moral superiority for themselves, and a sense of shared responsibility for all.

The act of confession about suffering becomes a ritualized act of self-elevation and catharsis, but also a means of distributing guilt, and sharing the blame among all parties to the conflict. It creates, at the same time, morally elevated individuals and communities of guilt, or responsibility. In these workshops, the testimony of suffering imposes a new moral order, in which pain is the organizing principle and collective guilt, the structural bond among its members. The public denunciation of violence thus simultaneously serves to relieve the individual, and impose responsibility on all others. In the Christian faith, where the priest is the addressee of the personal testimony of suffering or sin, the act serves as an individual hope of redemption. A similar act in the social space of a workshop, though, has other effects. It produces ethical superiority based on the Judeo-Christian principle that suffering creates morally higher individuals. Uri Avneri, an Israeli writer, brings this point home referring to the Holocaust, and the sense of moral superiority that it has created among present-day Israelis:

> "I will tell you something about the Holocaust. It would be nice to believe that people who have undergone suffering have been purified by suffering. But it's the opposite, it makes them worse. It corrupts. There is something in suffering that creates a kind of egoism… Sick people, when they are in pain, cannot speak about anyone but themselves. And when such monstrous things have happened to your people, you feel nothing can be compared to it. You get a moral power-of-attorney, a permit to do anything you want-because nothing can be compared to what has happened to us. This is a moral immunity, which is very clearly felt in Israel. Everyone is convinced that the IDF is the more humane than any other army. "Purity of arms" was the slogan of the *Haganah* army in early '48, but it was never true at all." (Uri Avneri, quoted in Fisk, 2001).

In sum, public testimonies of suffering do not always produce submissive subjects, who then have to be treated by external experts in health or reconciliation (Ngyen 2010). I argue that, in the case of the workshop on conflict resolution, the testimony of suffering has almost the opposite effect. It creates a morally elevated individual within a community that comes to bear the responsibility, not only for the past, but also for future crimes.

The Technical: Producing Professionals of a "New Discipline"

The "Third Annual Summer School for Conflict Prevention" was co-organized by the Canadian development organization, a Lebanese think tank, and a UN agency. Western embassies and Lebanese banks funded it. The 10-page information leaflet praised the "culture of peace", which was said to be promoted by "civil society initiatives and movements". It also noted that this summer school should be considered as part of this effort, since it was planned "to provide young civil society activists the opportunity to be trained on conflict transformation skills". Additionally, it constitutes a "unique experience" for these activists "to develop project ideas that will be implemented in the near future with the support of the organizing bodies".

The program was focused on "practical skills and techniques conveyed through an interactive methodology, including role plays, case studies, simulations, a field visit and innovative learning

methods such as mainly theatre-based training". Moreover, training in interpersonal and intergroup conflict transformation, as well as in "local practices in reconciliation" was also offered. "Skill packages" included the following: *"Interpersonal and Intergroup Conflict Transformation Skills", such as problem solving, conflict analysis, communication skills and negotiation; Theater & Creative Conflict Resolution; Multi-Party Mediation in International Relations, as well as the following lectures and lessons: Introduction to Peacekeeping Operations; The Role of International Organizations and Civil Society in Conflict Transformation; Environmental Consensus Building; Religion & Conflict Resolution*; and much more.

Day	7:30 - 8:45	9:00-10:30	10:30-11:00	11:00-12:30	1:00-2:00	2:00-3:30	3:45-5:00	7:30-8:30	
8.16	**ARRIVALS/ REGISTRATION**			**ORIENTATION** (Sci607) Basic logistics of the program, rules, non-program related logistics Campus tour		**NORMS AND COMMON LANGUAGE**	**FORMATION OF WORKING GROUPS** Group identity Pre-test	**OFFICIAL OPENING PANEL** (7:00) followed by dinner Dean, Alums; MCC rep., UNDP rep.	
8.17	Breakfast	**INSTITUTE OVERVIEW:** Goals & Expectations Overview Of Curriculum, Participant Learning Objectives	Coffee Break (Sci607)	**DEFINING OUR TERMS:** What Is Conflict Transformation & Peace Building?	Lunch (St. Lounge)	**THE THIRD SIDE PEACE BUILDING ROLES**	**CREATING CONNECTIONS** Trust Building & Group Formation	Dinner	**DEVELOPING INNER PEACE**
8.18		**APPROACHES TO CONFLICT** Understanding our conflict styles		**DEVELOPING POWERFUL LISTENING SKILLS**		**INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT ANALYSIS** Tools for Analysis Analysis versus telling stories about conflict *TIME ADJUSTMENT: 2:00-3:00*	***MILAGRO*: A COMMUNITY CONFLICT** Film Discussion of Case and Conflict Mapping Clarification of Assignment		Films

Figure 4.1 "Schedule", Third Annual Summer School for Conflict Transformation

Source: Author's archive

Upon arriving at the university campus, I saw the participants, all girls and boys in their early 20s, chatting outside the big classroom. I also saw the director and went straight to her. She introduced me to Mr. Katz, the trainer, a trainer from the United States in his late 30s or early 40s. Smiling, he asked me where I come from, and what I was doing exactly. He gave me the impression of a manager or a banker, his smile revealing a series of white and orderly teeth. Dressed in earthy colors, he seemed to be a very down-to-earth man. In the session, Mr. Katz introduced "the anthropologist" to the students. I was almost immediately confronted with the first overt effort by

the trainers to build some kind of professional elevation, when Mrs. Dowry, the second U.S-American trainer, referred to Mr. Katz as “Professor”. From my discussion with him before, I knew that Mr. Karz didn’t have a Phd, nor did he hold any university position.

Mrs. Dowry was definitely an impressive presence in the workshop. A theologian in training, she used her dominant voice and figure to intervene every time she thought it was the right moment, and to change the course of the discussion. In her early 50s, she had much experience teaching on conflict resolution. Although a catholic herself, she was working for the EMU in Virginia. She was inspiring for the students, reflecting an aura of authority in the field. She was the most outspoken trainer when it came to donors, funding and career-making in the field. Self-confident and loud, she was the one who asked the students to return to English, when she felt she was missing something important in the discussions in Arabic.

The students were young and ambitious. Most of them were Lebanese students at the two major and renowned private universities in the country, AUB and LAU. Only one of them was studying at the public Lebanese University. Some had travelled from different Arab countries, where they also studied in superior academic institutions, such as the American University in Cairo, the American University in Kuwait, and the Birzeit University in Ramallah. Most of them gave the impression of a dynamic young Arab youth, thirsting for fun, and looking for some useful career suggestions.

The walls in the classroom revealed a familiar workshop design: chart sheets were hanging in all corners after a laborious opening day, in which the students were divided into distinct working groups with self-chosen names such as “social healers”, “white hands”, “laugh live long”, and “live out loud”, among others. This particular day included three sessions focusing on different content. In the first session, Dr. Dowry presented a case study of a Mexican village in conflict with a big landowner over the ownership of a large chuck of common land. After describing the situation, the working groups were called upon to design a project proposal to submit to the donors. In order to facilitate a pragmatic setting, the trainer proposed a theatrical appearance, in

which the trainers played the role of *donors*, and students played the *NGOs*. The main focus of the training was on the funding deadlines, the style of project presentation, and the methods of fund-raising. After the afternoon break, both U.S. trainers held a session on the possibilities of further studies for Conflict Resolution in the U.S.

On the second day, I became even more aware of the explicit efforts by the trainers to cement their authority and expertise in the eyes of the students. Mr. Katz, who held a MA degree in conflict resolution became "Professor Katz", and Dr. Dowry, one among the many doctorates from George Mason, became the "first one to have graduated with a PhD in conflict analysis ever"! It turned out that Mr. Katz's statement to me that he was not receiving payment for this "socially oriented" job was equally untrue, since Zeinab, the Arab trainer, reassured me that he will receive quite a lot of money for this workshop.

> The next session entitled 'Public Conversations/dialogues' is about to start. The room has been split into two with dividers, and a third room will be also used in order to facilitate three different "dialogue groups". Students are slow in coming back. A paper on the board describes what dialogue is: "A conversation that is focused on a search for understanding others and ourselves better, not an attempt to persuade, convince or influence". Mr. Katz opens the session: "We will be using a dialogue technique which is universally used. Its spirit is focused on understanding others. We are going to split in three groups… it is going to be a listening exercise… The role of the facilitators is to remind you of the norms and to keep time and maintain a safe space, and, lastly, to ask a series of questions… if you don't want to answer, you can pass, pass for now, or answer.
>
> The "norms" are announced on the board.
>
> - Come prepared, stay engaged, keep working
> - Speak for yourself, from your own experience
> - Practice empathy
> - Actively participate

- Intention of building peace
- Listen carefully
- Respect diverse experiences
- Tolerate different moral principles
- Freedom to share (without attribution)…

(Fieldwork notes)

After having spent two days as an observer, I was struck by the superficiality of the entire exercise. A combination of elements created an atmosphere of superior knowledge, and inculcated respect among the participating students: touched up biographies of the trainers, fancy tropes and techniques presented as an integral part of the "new discipline of conflict resolution",[101] and some vague promises of successful academic and professional careers in the field. On the way back to Beirut, on a public bus, one of the participants, a 19-year old Palestinian student of Public Administration at the LAU told me, enthusiastically, that she would never have imagined that such important people like Katz or Dowry would be teaching at the *Summer School*.

For the students, the hope, dare I say, the lure, of a promising career in the field was an important element in their experience. In fact, the success of the entire workshop seemed to be based on a vague promise of such a career. The trainers were presented as successful role models of conflict resolution experts. Moreover, the participants received information about funding proposals and studying opportunities, and learnt how to build their own "personal inventory" of conflict resolution.

[101] In an effort to revise the history of the "discipline" of conflict resolution, Mr. Katz said: "Compared to philosophy, for example, which can go back thousands of years, our discipline has actually developed since the end of the Second World War. This is a pretty new discipline." At the same time, Dr. Dowry had asked all other trainers in advance to avoid any reference to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As the third trainer told me, she was apparently "fed up with the eternal coming up of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in all the peace workshops in the Middle East".

The path to professionalization

I. Anti-war activism

Rami's office in the Beirut district of *Badaru* seems to perfectly combine the memorabilia of an anti-war museum, and the functions of a modern, project-running, NGO. To enter the office, one has to go through an opening, where a series of photos highlight the efforts of the anti-war movement: pictures from the legendary 'March of the Disabled', which took place all over the country as a challenge to the cruel and deadly micro-geography of the militia checkpoints of the late Lebanese civil war; documents from the first meetings of the 'Action for a Civil Alternative,' an effort to push through the agenda of civil society in Lebanon for reconciliation and justice for the crimes of the militias; posters and photos from the meetings and the gatherings of the 'Mothers of the Disappeared,' who demanded to know what had happened to their loved ones during their abduction. In Rami's office, all of these coexist with professional plans and timetables for new development projects all over Lebanon, laid out on one big table.

Rami, a veteran anti-war activist, is filled with bitterness and disappointment about the current state of affairs in Lebanon. His memory contains enthusiastic and nostalgic stories from the past, such as that of a "guy's cousin from the South, who knew so little about big towns," and who had a brilliant personal development that amazed everyone. But also heart-breaking accounts of how the "same guys" who used to chase, and break the legs of, Rami and his friends, when they were advocating non-violence in the South, back in the '90s, "are now accusing Hizbullah of using armed resistance against Israel." This, he hastens to add, does not mean that he supports the use of violence generally. "I don't agree with it, this is my stance as a person generally", he tells me. His library is full of books on non-violence and development.[102]

The discussion about the old stuff makes him sad and happy at the same time. Happy to remember a glorious time, when they thought that the world was in their hands, and sad to realize

[102] Some of them were written by the South American theologian, Paolo Frere, who had an immense influence on Rami and his colleagues in their first phase as anti-war activists.

that this time has resolutely passed, and that much of it has remained unrecorded and untold. This is why he eagerly asks me to provide him with the results of the "research", as soon as I am done with it. He asks me to promise that. I tell him that I will do my best. He insists: "If you don't write it, give me the draft and I will do it".

During the course of my fieldwork, I often encountered similar attitudes; people who were active in the past in myriad civil society efforts to stop the war, to bring about peace and reconciliation, to bring the culprits to justice, to live a life with dignity and hope, were often so exhausted by these activities that have even denied to write and talk about it. And then, after many of these attempts failed, the disappointment and the feeling of defeat were so devastating that they felt unwilling and unable to re-open the Pandora's box with those memories, in fear of further despair. As it was with the official decision on the civil war crimes, they often chose amnesty, and hoped for amnesia. They chose amnesty towards old colleagues and co-activists, too, with whom they had huge grievances. Now, Rami tells me, every time they meet they pretend to be "friends," and, thus, resolutely avoid talking of "the past".

When I invited Rami to open the Pandora's box for me, he did it very hesitantly. For sure, he did not seem to trust me enough to open up completely. I knew him through a common friend, but this didn't seem to matter much. I don't believe it was me, personally, nor me as a researcher, that he didn't trust; at least, that is what I wish to believe. Rather, I believe it was the weight of the anger and resentment he was carrying that would come up were he to revisit that part of his life, and remember the unfulfilled ideals he once valued so highly. Arguably, few could deal with so much pain; the pain that war causes, but even more so, the intense pain of false hope. When the war ended in 1990, Rami was 23 years old. In the final years of the 1980s, he was active in protests against the rule of the militias: "We used to do many sit-ins, like banner manifestations, like stop the war, stop the violence…things like that." After the war, he and his friends collaborated with the people resisting the Syrians, albeit "under the table, not openly and at the same time (they) were working on two main projects at that time". They were organizing protests against obligatory military service, and were working on reconciliation between the former

fighting parties in the Mountain area. This was the place where Rami and his friends would use "all of (their) knowledge…and expertise in non-violent action and in conflict transformation." They invested in what they called "community mobilization" through development projects, which were funded, as Rami emphatically stresses, either by themselves, or by the community "without conditions; unconditional". He stresses the fact that all these efforts were under the umbrella of reconciliation, and not "conflict resolution".

In fact, most of these efforts were inspired by ideals of social justice, as well as the persuasion that a *war tribunal* should be established in Lebanon. "To prove this point", Rami refers to the alignment of their group with a movement called 'The Citizens' Movement' (*Movement des Citoyennes*). These were Lebanese citizens living in France who came back in the 1990s, with the common objective to introduce a war tribunal in Lebanon, and to act against the *Amnesty Law*. However, their efforts had to cease due to pressure and financial difficulties: "We were all volunteers (…) all of our members couldn't afford to keep on going and we refused to take money for the work we did, we considered it as a commitment. That was the mission, we could not think to make money out of it." Opposing the older order of things, and demanding an end to all kinds of militarization, as well as for the culprits to be brought to justice, were the main objectives of the peace movement at the end of the war.

These principles and priorities brought some of them closer to the ideas and practices of non-violent action against militarization, that have been developed elsewhere, such as in France. Thus, representatives of a non-violent, grassroots French organization called *Cun du Larzac* visited Lebanon during the summer of 1990, invited by another Lebanese association called *Cultural and Social Work Association*. The activists from France were known for the resistance against military bases and nuclear power plants in the French province of Larzac.[103] They trained

[103] The French activists had developed a "charma", a small, isolated and self-sufficient community, but they also maintained contacts and relations with many prominent non-violent philosophers, such as Jean Marie Muller, whose books have influenced them to a great extent. Muller was also involved in non-violent action in Poland, during the times

Lebanese activists in non-violent action and passive resistance: "How to confront violence with non-violence…How to deal with conflicts, but from a non-violence perspective". Techniques of non-violence, such as moving carpets, or "playing dead", were taught: "We used to sit on the ground and we walked while sitting, each 5-10 minutes you make a move". These techniques were used almost immediately in *direct action*, such as the protest against the rise of tuition fees at the American University of Beirut.

The importance of 'peace groups' in such strikes and demonstrations is highlighted by another veteran of the field, who is still active and well known in the field. Sami went to university in 1985, and with some others, founded a 'Peace Group.' Back then, Sami says, "the framework in the public concern had, for most of it, an approach related to a faction or a militia. To get involved in social work, a person had to get into political and confessional issues. The groups at university used to compete to get a new member, and any proposal to a new group wasn't acceptable and the new group had to fight with all the present groups at university." The Peace Group, however, was immediately accepted among the various parties, Sami says. In the beginning, the role of the group was to help new students integrate into the university system through the provision of information on new courses, books, and professors, etc. However, after a strike had been organized by all the groups - against the increase in student registration fees - the Peace Group was chosen to represent the striking students against the university's leadership. Their neutral stance was, according to Sami, the decisive point: "Our main role as Peace Group started to be imposed on us, at the university level. For 15 days we dealt and negotiated with the situation, by communicating the latest development to the students, and taking approval from them on the next steps to do; we had great results."

For many of these activists, conflict resolution was just one among many "techniques" they would use in their multiple confrontations with the army, the university authorities, the police, or the state in general. The activists' engagement against the war was very rarely acknowledged by

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of Solidarnoj. Together with the French activists, came a member from the Center Martin Luther King in Lausanne, Switzerland. See http://www.larzac.org/cun/LeCun-uncoindhistoire.pdf.pdf for a history of the association.

the authorities, if not openly condemned and repressed. Many of them quote the beginning of UNESCO's *Education for Peace and Human Rights* 1989 program as an essential moment of official recognition and institutionalization of their efforts.[104] These meetings led to the establishment of four coordinating committees, which were regarded as representing the "various Lebanese NGOs and welfare and cultural associations" (UNESCO 1991) who attended the previous preparatory gatherings.[105] Subsequently, the represented NGOs were called upon to submit project proposals for funding. The United Nations and donor agencies were requested to "study the possibility of financing or adopting these that correspond to their respective mandate as well as to take into consideration the criteria established by the Lebanese NGOs themselves" (ibid.).

To sum up, the final years of the civil war in Lebanon witnessed a substantial popular movement against the post-1982 war situation, and the arbitrary rule of warlords and militias. This movement demanded the end of the war, the establishment of war tribunals, as well as concrete information and effective action on the issue of the "Disappeared".[106] As a movement of popular mobilization, it employed a series of practices as a means of pressure, such as demonstrations, marches, strikes and sit-ins, many of which were aimed at the powerful elites and the militia leaders, so that they would stop the war and respond to public demands. Thus, the demand for

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[104] Indeed, in the final report of the follow-up meeting on "Peace building and development in Lebanon" organized by UNESCO in Lebanon, the relentless efforts of the NGOs and the associations during the war were widely acknowledged. Subsequently, calls were formulated for the support of these NGOs especially at a moment when Lebanon "more than ever" needed international cooperation to ensure peace through "sustainable socio-economic development". It was the moment that UNESCO in cooperation with IPRA, the *International Peace Research Association* decided to provide a forum to "examine and analyze together means by which NGOs work can be most effective through greater cooperation with UN agencies" (UNESCO 1991).

[105] These were the following: *Group I. Education for Peace and Human Rights, Group II. Development, Youth and Displaced, Group III. Women, Children and Peace, Group IV. Culture, Peace and Democracy* (ibid.)

[106] The "Disappeared" became a central issue for the anti-war movement. They were the tens of thousands of Lebanese, and others (Palestinians, Syrians etc.), who had been abducted by militias, armies or secret services, never to be seen again. Many, if not all, were believed to be dead. Both organizations, "The Movement of the disabled" and the "Committees of the families of the disappeared", which, during the 1982 Israeli invasion into Lebanon, began working on the issue of kidnappings, and were considered important players in the peace and anti-war movement.

”peace” on behalf of civil society was clearly identified with the aim of pressure on elites through acts of popular mobilizations against the war.

II. Peace Missionaries: Mennonites and the “Christian Afghanistan”

The “Mennonites Central Committee” begun working in Lebanon in 1976. At that time, they primarily conducted relief work, focused on South Lebanon. However, after the Civil War, their long-standing experience and expertise in building ‘civil peace,’ as well as their religious motivation, which distinguished them from other US associations considered suspicious by many Lebanese, and thus enabled them to expand their activities within the country.[107] Thus, the MCC became involved in the work of reconciliation, and also supported many local groups unconditionally. As they did not initiate their own projects, they began looking for local organizations to fund. They provided financial and technical support, as well as opportunities to visit the US to study at the *Eastern Mennonite University*, which specializes in peace education.[108]

In general, the adoption of many peace activists by the Mennonites brought about at least three essential qualitative changes. First, the perception of peace and peacemaking was now heavily focused on two main themes: the psychological and moral aspects, such as trauma, healing, reconciliation and forgiveness, on one hand, and more technical aspects, such as conflict analysis and conflict resolution techniques, on the other. Often, the combination of those aspects, especially within the conservative environment of the EMU in Virginia, was quite puzzling for some Lebanese. This is what one of the first Lebanese to go to the EMU had to say:

> “Well, for me personally, I was going to the USA for the first time… I had the opportunity before but I didn’t go...well, I didn’t think it’s the most interesting country to discover, but then I had to go… Virginia... I never thought that USA could be

[107] In the words of an insider in the field, “most Americans couldn’t come to Lebanon till the mid 1990’s. It was a war zone! So the only people who dared to come were the Mennonites”.

[108] Until today, the MCC has sent at least 13 people to the EMU.

Christian conservative, don't drink alcohol, or don't dance, don't don't don't... it was like a Christian Afghanistan… for me it was really interesting to see that… it was also interesting to see all this technical stuff, the knowledge, the techniques, you learn it at the university… This was interesting… I was learning, which is always good... but after you... hmm... they know they have this American technique that everything is easy and simple... I intended to laugh a little bit but I think it works also... but I learned to analyze a conflict…"

Second, the Mennonites provided diverse opportunities to "network" beyond Lebanon, as the participants call it. This included many practical things, such as getting introduced to potential donors and getting to know other actors in the field within and outside the region. For example, a sponsored training at the EMU usually included many meetings and visits at different US-based associations working for peace, such as the United States Institute of Peace, the Carnegie Endowment, etc. Another important aspect of this was that many activists had, for the first time, the chance to travel, not only to the US, but also within the region of the Middle East, which was otherwise prohibitive due to restrictive visa procedures. This is what Rami told me:

"(T)he case is still now, it is much easier for you as a European or a foreigner to travel in all of the region, while it is not the case for us, the natives… we are living in some kind of concentration, we are like the Native Americans… this is your reservation, if you go to another reservation, you are suspect… that's why when I go to the (United) States for instance, and they look into my passport, (they ask me) why did you go to Jordan? Why did you go to Egypt? Why did you go to Yemen? They are allowed to do that, but I am not…

NK: The Mennonites helped you overcome this problem?

R: They initiated a regional network on this issue... it was easier for us to go there… because if you go, let's say…ten, five persons from Lebanon at our age at that time

> they want to go to Jordan, you are a suspect. But if you go with the Mennonites, you are not a suspect. The same for Egypt, same for Palestine, same for Lebanon… they used that and they also had this experience sharing…"

The third important shift concerned the image of the peacemakers themselves. To a great extent, the peacemaker seemed to have the qualities of a peace missionary. Note, for example, the language used by the MCC to "spread the knowledge of peace-building and conflict resolution to other places". Previous activists had played an essential role in these efforts. They were regarded as those who "had the commitment (but) needed the skills", hence the MCC's contribution was to provide these committed men and women with the necessary skills, "so all these people became trainers in the coming years". Through training, they were advanced to the status of the trainer themselves, and then they were sent to different places and people to teach the principles and techniques of peacemaking. The similarities to missionary, or even apostolic, work are quite evident here. The activists were thus regarded as individuals initially equipped with a moral superiority that had to be galvanized, and then complemented, by a technical component so that they could turn into proper missionaries. As soon as this task was accomplished, they were expected to go to the people and spread the knowledge and the message of peace.

Hence, the Mennonites had already initiated a radical shift in the ways that peacemaking was to be understood within the Lebanese society. To be sure, they contributed to the disentanglement of the peace movement from issues of power and justice, and instead oriented it towards psychological and technical aspects. By turning the activists into missionaries, not only did they manage to turn them away from the previous issues, but also and mainly to initiate important tendencies that were to further dominate later, such as the professionalization and the internationalization of the field.

III. Peace Orientalism: Arab-American political scientists

The Mennonites were not the only ones who provided the local peace activist scene with structured opportunities of international debate on similar issues. Another small but important

group seemed to have engaged in the importation of knowledge and theories on conflict resolution, developed mainly in the U.S. academic landscape, into Lebanon. These were Arab-American academics who had spent considerable time in the U.S. studying in prestigious universities. After the war, they returned to Lebanon and attempted to spread their acquired knowledge through conferences and university courses. To a great extent, they seemed to have internalized Western conceptions of the Arab world ,and often presented the latter as an inherently "tribal" and "underdeveloped" place. As a result, their take on conflict resolution and peace was based on the construction of a Middle East, with its own rules and history, and which could not easily import the principles of conflict resolution made in the West. Such a task needed considerable adaptation and cultural fine-tuning.

Two texts from that period and that field best exemplify the general stance of the Arab-American academics of conflict resolution. The first is written by Paul Salem entitled "A critique of Western conflict resolution from a non-Western perspective" (Salem 1993), and the second, by George Irani, is called "Islamic Mediation Techniques for Middle Eastern conflicts" (Irani 1999). Salem's account is mainly a product of his experience as the coordinator of the *Conflict Resolution Project* at the *American University of Beirut*.[109] It reads like a complaint, or a corrective, by someone who accepts the general principles of the field of conflict resolution, but vehemently rejects a crude universalist application. Well-integrated in the field of conflict resolution, he nevertheless takes an indigenous position in order to correct a Western product towards the fine-tuning and adaptation of the methodological tools and scientific definitions of conflict resolution, praxis and theory. In general, the text is structured through small, compact paragraphs in which aspects of Western philosophical and political tradition are highlighted and contrasted to Arab counterparts. Religious, political, philosophical and practical "gains", or developments, of the West are juxtaposed to the "not yet" dimension of the Arab world. This form

[109] AUB played a primary role as a site for the import and dissemination of major theories and practices of conflict resolution into Lebanon in the beginning of the 1990s. A seminal conference, held in Cyprus in 1993, under the aegis of three major American research foundations and the premises of the AUB, marked the official beginning of 15 years of conflict research, theory and praxis in Lebanon.

and pattern of presentation makes up for the first problematic point of the text: Quite diverse traditions, carrying extremely different influences are treated equally in the text, given the same space and same trope of reference.

For example, the place of postmodernism in contemporary conflict theory, which has very little – if anything - to do with theories and practices of Western conflict resolution. On the contrary, the latter is principally based on the most "modern" theories of Western thought, such as developmentalism, economism, rational choice theory, and evolutionism. Second, although Salem warns against the dangers of "reductionsim, essentialism and simplification", his main argument is indulged in a crude juxtaposition of the celebrated values of individualism, peace and utilitarianism, on one hand, versus the "incompatible values" of the Arab world, where clans reign, "loss of face" is crucial, and real individuals do not yet exist. The "not yet" argument on the Arab world compared to Western achievements is often repeated. "The Arab World is on its way, but please dear West do not rush us", seems to be Salem's credo. In more general terms, the main argument of the text seems to be based on an effort to bring culture back in. In Salem's own words, "(T)he conclusion to be drawn from this is not that the Arab world, for example, is more conflict-prone or less conflict resolution-oriented than the West, but that in transporting Western conflict resolution theories and techniques to the Arab world or elsewhere, they must undergo considerable cultural adaptation" (ibid., 369).

The second text is by *George Irani*, another political scientist trained in the US (Irani 1999). Irani seems to reiterate many problematic concepts about Middle Eastern political violence that were created in the West, such as the idea of the "re-emerging of centuries-old conflicts", the importance of the tribal structures of the societies, and the culture in general.[110] Aware of the general critique by many that U.S-based conflict resolution is to a great extent a U.S. tool to

[110] Irani participated in a conference on "conflict resolution" in the Arab world, financed by the United States Institute of Peace in 1994, and with the institutional backing of the Lebanese American University, Irani's employer at the time. The conference participants represented many different groups, which were directly or indirectly part of the emerging field, such as the "Families of the Disappeared".

impose unfair peace agreements, and finally, the normalization of relations between the Arabs and the Israelis, to the disadvantage of the former, Irani takes a cultural shortcut and instead advocates "the importance of being sensitive to indigenous ways of thinking and feeling, as well as to local rituals for managing and reducing conflicts." (ibid.). The purpose of the essay is thus to explore and analyze "non-Western modes and rituals of conflict resolution in Arab-Islamic societies". The way to do this is to "fathom the deep cultural, social, and religious roots that underlie the way Arabs behave when it comes to conflict reduction and reconciliation" and the "socio-economic, cultural, and anthropological background in which conflicts erupt and are managed in the Middle East" (ibid.). To the author, the latter is comprised of issues such as the following: "The importance of patrilineal families; the question of ethnicity; the relevance of identity; the nature of tribal and clan solidarity; the key role of patron-client relationships; and the salience of norms concerning honor and shame need to be explored in their geographical and socio-cultural context." (ibid.)

Irani, after having established the cultural foundations of the different causes and types of conflicts between the West and the Arab world, as well as "indigenous techniques and procedures" as he calls them, namely, *wasta* (patronage-mediation) and *tahkeem* (arbitration), proceeds to present and analyse two "examples of Arab-Islamic culture and values" that should be looked into how to approach conflict resolution in the Middle East. Irani presents the so-called "rituals" of *sulH* (translated by Irani as "settlement") and of *musalaHa* (trnsl. as reconciliation) as such examples, and devotes a significant part of his paper to the description these rituals. Needless to say, these efforts are undertaken with the help of anthropological language and literature. Edmund Leach's ritual definition is referred to, as are Quranic elements that constitute the conceptual Islamic basis of *sulH* as a contract between two parts (clans, families or bigger structures), usually on the occasion of murder. The ritual of *sulH* includes four phases, according to Irani: first, the act of reconciliation itself, which includes the agreement on the blood money to be paid to the family of the deceased person. Second, the two parties shake hands under the supervision of the *musliHs* or *jaha*, who have the role of judge or mediator between the two

conflicting parties. Third, the family of the murderer visits the home of the victim to drink a cup of bitter coffee, and fourth, the ritual concludes with a meal hosted by the family of the offender. It is also noted that although the rituals "vary in different places", the basic philosophy is based on "*sulH*" (settlement), "*musalaHa*" (reconciliation), "*musafaha*" (hand-shaking), and "*mumalaha*" ("partaking of salt and bread," i.e., breaking bread together).

The text concludes with an open call to "follow and adapt" the ancient rituals to contemporary processes of peacemaking in the wider Middle East. Apart from an apparent respect for established traditions, the rituals help to involve "religious and traditional leaders" in "empowering their followers as long as peace is based on a sense of equity and justice" (ibid.). Irani has no doubts on this point. To him, the collective empowerment of the citizens "ought to be undertaken in coordination with religious and clan leaders in urban, rural, and remote areas" (ibid.). It can be said that this position is the one that holds the largest amount of Orientalist perceptions than any other in the text. Indeed, at a historical moment when Lebanese citizens have come to question the rule of the leaders, and their guilty role in inciting violence based on sectarian and other identity-driven discourses, a political scientist calls for the "respect" of the same structures as a means of conflict resolution. Overlooking the dynamic character of contemporary societies, the essentialized ritual of "*sulH*" is invested with a power to pacify without addressing the social grievances that led to the conflicts at the first place. Instead, it reasserts the power of the "traditional leaders", shifting their position as part of the problem to part of the proposed solution. Using and abusing the anthropological language and perspective, the glorification of an ordinary practice of fact-finding and guilt-imposing becomes a resurrected tool in contemporary conflict resolution. However, this attempt did not remain unaddressed by anthropologists, who were adamant in commenting on the problematic aspects of such efforts, and of the culturalized trends in the field of conflict resolution altogether. Laura Nader has launched a strong criticism against such ideas that tend to essentialize previous power structures, which finally become part of what she has called "controlling processes" that tend to "construct and institutionalize culture" (Nader and Grande 2002; Nader 1997).

IV. Peace Professionalism: *The Lebanese Conflict Resolution Network*

In the mid 1990's, the political atmosphere in the country and the region was quite peculiar. On one hand, the government of the Saudi-Lebanese billionaire *Rafiq al-Hariri* was investing millions in infrastructure projects (highways, bridges, gentrification of Beirut's downtown area) hoping that tons of concrete could bring about development, and eventually hide the haunting past underneath it. On the other hand, the same Syrian-controlled government was stubbornly eschewing calls for true reconciliation, for effective action on the issue of the disappeared, or for establishing tribunals for the culprits of the war. At the same time, most of South Lebanon was still occupied by Israel, who had just signed the *Oslo Peace Accords* with the new-born *Palestinian Authority*. While Lebanon's development strategy was built on the premise and the promise that "peace (with Israel) is coming" (e.g. a modern highway to the borders in the South was then also constructed), the failure of the Oslo Accords to safeguard true Palestinian statehood, and, furthermore, genuine peace for all involved, meant that words such as *peace* and *conflict resolution* sounded suspicious to the ears of many.

Amidst this atmosphere of generalized suspicion, on one hand, and hopes for true reconciliation among peace activists, on the other, a U.S.-based global peace NGO, which had already played a substantial role in the preparation and the deliberation of the Oslo Accords in neighboring Palestine, decided to expand its activities into Lebanon. *Search for Common Ground* had already approached the first Lebanese activists during their stay in the US with the EMU scholarship, and expressed its interest in "coming to Lebanon". Much to Rami's surprise, however, when they decided to launch a series of workshops in Lebanon, they chose another EMU-alumni as the coordinator. Premised on U.S money and hope deriving from South Africa (many of the people I talked to from that period emphasized the fact that the first trainer of the SFCG was a South African, who had allegedly taken part in the anti-apartheid struggle), the NGO made an open call to Lebanese NGOs working in the field of peace and reconciliation to attend a collective effort.

Thus, those activists trained at the EMU, as well as the Arab-American political scientists working on issues of conflict resolution, and also others who became interested via the much publicized ads in local newspapers, converged in a series of meetings under the auspices of the Search for Common Ground. The meetings were attended by at least 33 local NGOs.

In the words of Zeinab, who had just started in the field at the time, "after the workshops, some of the people attending, came together and decided to keep the effort up". The tone was given by U.S-trained academics, people such as Paul Salem, Ghassan Mokhaiber and George Irani. Zeinab regards them as "the first ones to start formal Conflict Resolution in Lebanon. It is all a matter of naming. There were some efforts before that, but they did it the American way." The collective effort, called the *Lebanese Network for Conflict Resolution* (LCRN), was established in 1996. However, problems appeared almost at the moment of its inception. There were definite differences regarding the nature of the problem and the character of their initiative. While many activists and NGO workers, such as Rami, preferred to keep LCRN as a loose network that could coordinate the efforts of different organizations working on similar issues, most of the academics and others who had joined them, wanted to see it become an NGO in its own right. This is what Rami told me:

> NK: At that time there were some academics, who were dealing with the issue…
>
> R: They came later on… they all came later... and they even wanted to join our group and we refused... they used to come to our meetings…
>
> NK: and you didnt want to integrate them! Why?
>
> R: No! well… they are not the kind of expertise that we wanted at the grassroots… but we said "hi, how are you"?
>
> NK: but they bring a kind of political baggage…
>
> R: Yeah, we don't want this political baggage as well…
>
> NK: because they are academics or because they have a certain political…
>
> R: Both, both…

NK: but you are not anti-academic...

R: Of course we are not anti-academic, that would be stupid to be that… that kind of expertise we don't need, and we don't need to be associated with…

Despite the differences, the LCRN organized meetings in which activists, NGO workers and academics gathered to discuss regional developments and readings on conflict resolution as well as to plan relevant actions. While hand-picked activists continued to visit EMU for training, conflict resolution workshops inside and outside Lebanon (e.g. Cyprus, Tunisia etc.) helped them meet like-minded people and establish regional networks. Funded by the SFCG, the LCRN organized workshops in different parts of Lebanon, and advertised them in the Lebanese press. Often though, these workshops were advertised as organized by the donor only.

The atmosphere of hope, and the feeling of engagement, is clearly manifested in the words of Nazim, one of the enthusiastic participants in these first meetings, and one of the first of the participants to go to EMU, but also someone who left the field of conflict resolution quite early later on and now leads an environmental NGO in Lebanon:

NK: You told me that at the beginning LCRN was something like a political movement…

Nazim: No, I wouldn't say so. I would say there were people concerned with social justice…

NK: And what brought them together?

Nazim: This workshop I think… this workshop… and people who stayed after the workshop… these people stayed because of an idea, not because it was funded or that it was interesting to work on… there were people convinced that we have to do this reconciliation work in Lebanon... you see at the same time there was this thing happening in South Africa… so we were all connected by the news... what was going on... and Mandela... and because the guy was from South Africa... the guy who came from South Africa was involved… if we had a trainer coming from the US and blab la bla, it would probably have been different… there you had something that was working in his country. (Nazim interview, Beirut, summer 2007).

Funded by the SFCG, trained by the EMU, and motivated by their strong belief in reconciliation, the members of the LCRN kicked off in good hope, but without having overcome the old divisions. The steering committee, comprised mostly of the U.S.-trained academics was resolutely pushing the project of professionalization forward. Thus, one of the U.S.-trained academics, the lawyer Ghassan Mokhaiber, chose his best student in the AUB course that he taught, 'Negotiation and Mediation' to become the first executive manager of the LCRN. The formation of an alliance with IMTI, the *International Management and Training Institute*, was another decision that paved the way for the transformation of the LCRN into a professional organization, almost exclusively specialized in training in conflict resolution. According to one of the members of the steering committee, the exclusive focus on training was not the initial plan. Rather, "LCRN had to work on three dimensions: First, on scholarship of conflict and conflict dimension (...) as a think tank of conflict resolution. Second, (in) training and then (organize) interventions towards conflict resolution." (Interview Mokhaiber, Beit Mary Lebanon, April 2008).

However, LCRN survived but neither as a think tank, nor as an activist organization. Rather, it became a "specialized non-profit organization", whose purpose is to "develop and disseminate the principles and skills of conflict resolution and organizational dynamics through non-adjudicatory means such as negotiation, mediation, facilitation, and other collaborative problem solving methods, in a way that would best suit the nature and needs of the concerned communities." (LCRN organizational profile, personal archive).

Tensions, Failures and Divisions

Rami and his group believed that making a training NGO out of LCRN was wrong for at least two reasons. First, because this NGO would eventually have to compete with already established NGOs working on similar issues, which would result in creating strife and competition instead of solidarity and coordination. Second, because it was "ethically not correct", since LCRN had already been using the resources of these NGOs for two years. Rami and his colleagues saw,

however, that their objections did not succeed in "stopping this". Hence, they withdrew from LCRN, and stopped working on "conflict resolution" altogether.

> R: I stopped working with this issue… in 1998/9…
>
> NK: Was the experience that negative?
>
> R: No, but it has taken this form that we don't agree about.. Our NGO stopped totally... (he hushes)
>
> NK: You had at the beginning, as I understood, many activists with you…
>
> R: Yes, it was our part… activism…
>
> NK: And it became what?
>
> R: It became a business and an objective by itself, like come let us train you in conflict resolution, it's the fashion now, so everybody was doing training in conflict resolution, but for what? What purpose? There is no purpose... you see what I mean? So, it was not our interest... we stopped collaborating… we had ehh… (with his hands he demonstrates the split, making them separate from each other) (...) if they put me in the corner, I ll do it in a very different way… not on the topic of conflict resolution..
>
> NK: Under which topic?
>
> It depends! It depends on the context… what are you working on? What is your action? Are you working on human rights? Lets see how you can use this tool in working on human rights… what are you working about? Lobbying? You are advocating for a cause? What is the cause you are advocating? Are you having problems in dealing with conflicts among your???, so lets work on this... are you having problems in dealing with your partners? Are you doing an advocacy campaign? Lets work on that… but for us it should be something comprehensive that has a purpose… it's a tool, its not an objective... lets teach you how to resolve a conflict, its stupid, for us its stupid, I am sorry…

After abandoning conflict resolution, Rami and his friends concentrated on community reconciliation and development, but also on issues of social justice, like bringing the culprits of the war to justice. In this, they aligned themselves with the *Citizens Movement*, a France-based group of Lebanese citizens, who pursued the establishment of a war tribunal in Lebanon, and who

were asking for the abolition of the Amnesty Law. The two groups worked well together, and were even planning to merge, but it didn't happen. To Rami, the reasons were "more financial". They refused to take money for the work they were doing, but they also could not afford going on without financial support, as he says. "We considered it as a commitment… that was the mission, we could not think to make money out of it. We lasted 10 years, we started in 91 and we stopped in 2000".

Alas, for the ones who went on with LCRN, things did not work out perfectly either. Apparently, there were major problems between LCRN and SFCG. First, there were constant tensions between the engagement of SFCG in Israel/Palestine and its goals in Lebanon. According to one of the participants, this was "part of the difficulty for the Search for Common Ground getting involved in Lebanon". Their activity there could be perceived as preparation of the ground for Lebanon's peace with Israel. The Lebanese members of LCRN would not get tired of cautioning SFCG not to get into this: "That they have to stay in the background, this is why we wanted it rooted in the Lebanese experiment rather than something that was imported from Search for Common Ground!" (LCRN member interview, Beirut).

Second, there was the problem of ownership. SFCG used to claim LCRN as one of her projects: "(t)hey wanted to show the LCRN as their own product, as if they planted it, they created it; I was shocked all the time, we had very long, heated conversations with them… including one of their top management crying at one point in time in Lebanon…" (ibid.). The strife over ownership seemed to be the final blow to the relationship between LCRN and SFCG. According to a member of the steering committee, and LCRN's former president, they decided to break off the relationship because - despite the "minimum funds" that the LCRN was receiving from the U.S. NGO - the latter went on regarding the former as its owner.

The failure of the LCRN to become a collective umbrella for the efforts of Lebanese civil society to achieve the aims of true reconciliation, justice and a better future for the country, may be attributed to a number of factors, which differ according to each participant. However, a

retrospective perspective shows that the conflicts and disagreements that accompanied the establishment of the LCRN were clear indications of an inherent tension between a political-legal vision of the peace field as a principal site of popular or "community mobilization", on one hand, and a technical-ethical configuration embodied in the image of the peace expert, on the other.

In what follows, I show how this configuration played out in the constitution of the professionalized field of conflict resolution in Lebanon.

Conflict Resolution in Lebanon Today: Three Main Features

If the year 1996 can be seen to mark the beginning of a period of professionalization of peace activism in Lebanon, ten years later this process can be said to be in full bloom under the label of 'conflict resolution', albeit many of the initial protagonists have left it. Despite these losses - due to differing expectations and disagreements about de-politicization (in the case of Rami and his colleagues) or in pursuit of more effective ways to build successful careers as think tank researchers , many newcomers joined in. Despite relatively poor funding - according to one of today's leading figures, "conflict resolution was never high on the agenda of people who fire the shots, so when it comes to big money they favor 'reform' or 'good governance'- it managed to associate its name with peacemaking in the domain of civil society. Yet, sporadic efforts to include "indigenous", i.e. Arab or Islamic forms of conflict resolution, or to produce specialized scholarship on conflict never materialized. Instead, the field of 'conflict resolution' today is almost synonymous with the practice of training in conflict resolution . However, not all of the people active in the field agree on the definitive aspects of it. While some believe that it is primarily about a distinct "method" that can be applied to all possible situations of conflict, others consider it the legitimate heir of the previous peace activist movement. These differentiations could be interpreted as the effect of varying evaluations of the field in a spectrum that spans from an ethical-technical edge to a political-legal one.

Schism

> Judith knew nothing of the second workshop until I told her about it. Although first brought to Lebanon by the LAU faculty member and organizer of the second workshop in Byblos, this time she was invited by someone else to train people in the first workshop. When she found out about the parallel workshop, her first reaction was that she doesn't want to find herself in a conflict between the two organizers. She knows both well and she works with both. She would like to call (the organizer of the second workshop) and explain to her that she didn't know about the competitions. She would prefer to work with the second workshop, though, because they were "more interested in interpersonal conflicts than international, big format stuff". She described the first workshop as one, which was "going higher, they (were) interested in leadership training", etc, while the first one still worked with social workers. She didn't want to be very critical with the first workshop though, since she wanted to work with them again, but it was clear that she didn't share many of their ideas and general approach. She said explicitly that "any conflict training should be rooted in a local conflict" as a way of disapproving of the technical approach of the first workshop. Generally speaking, she seemed to have a much more integrated opinion about the "conflict theory". She also told me that she thought another group as very interesting, and that she liked their work much more than this one. (…) They were "focusing on Lebanese conflicts, they (were) stemming from the civil society and they (were) not doing it for money or recognition". She was here in February for a workshop with them. (Fieldwork notes).

This particular note from the field is interesting on many levels. First, because it demonstrates the active way through which a fieldworker may influence developments in the field under study. Judith had no idea that when she was invited to Lebanon as trainer in a workshop on conflict transformation, another workshop with a similar title and aims was under way only a

few kilometers further north. I asked many participants of both workshops about the reasons and the effects of this openly antagonistic situation and, as expected, I received different responses. However, almost all of them allude to an existing competition within the field, which is arguably the result of the rapid growth and expansion of the field. New actors have joined in, and each one has their own interpretation of the problem as well as different ways to deal with it.

Second, her reaction to this news reveals a highly professional attitude, which is oriented towards keeping good relations to both organizers, since she "wants to work with both of them again". Despite the fact that she disagrees with the approach of the people who invited her, she has no hesitation about accepting the job. A professional attitude is premised rather on the priority of networking and "making a name" than on individual opinions about which is the best way to address the issues discussed. In a highly competitive field, where resources are scarce and working opportunities are few, personal viewpoints matter little. Often in my fieldwork, I encountered critical stances like the one expressed by Judith, albeit they seldom resulted in the abandonment of the field or the rejection of employment opportunities. In fact, the incompatibility of a critical stance, on one hand, and the necessity to network, on the other, have often resulted in an attitude that could be characterized as "denial" of the openly negative aspects of the situation. This is - by the way - one possible means of interpreting Zeynab's ambivalent attitude. While she does work with the people she disagrees with, she must do so in order to make sure she earns a living. As a result, she tends to paint a picture of the field with rosy colors, so that she can justify her participation in it.

Third, the note reveals a growing differentiation within the field in the sense of approaches and aims followed. Thus, some are regarded as having a more technical approach, while others are more sensitive to the local context, as Judith says. However, as the fieldwork has demonstrated, the existence of such a rigid division is highly questionable. As I will show further down, my participation in the workshop that Judith perceived as more oriented towards the local context, revealed equally technical and de-contextualized tendencies as the one that

she had worked with. This does not mean to say that differences are not there. Indeed, these are the manifestations of the tension about which I argue. Nevertheless, there is little evidence that can counter the argument that suggests the growing influence of an ethical-technical configuration over the legal-political and contextual perspective.

Transnationalization of careers

The professionalization of the field went hand in hand with clear intentions of establishing Beirut and Lebanon as a regional center for conflict resolution in the Arab World. Thus, the LCRN was first to develop a conflict resolution manual in Arabic, along with an accompanying reader (Balian 1998; Safa 2007). According to Safa, the manual is "the first in the Arab world" and "includes original sections on negotiation, conflict analysis, mediation and facilitation, along with a section adapted from MCC's English conflict resolution manual" (Safa 2007,7). Around one thousand copies were subsequently distributed all over the Arab world.. In the last decades, Lebanese trainers in conflict resolution have participated and led workshops across the region, such as Morocco, Yemen, Jordan and Syria, Iraq, Bahrain, Qatar, but also beyond the Arab World in Montenegro and Armenia. Additionally, Lebanese trainers are often invited to workshops in Europe, the United States, Japan and other parts of Asia.

This development stands in stark contrast to the situation during the first stages of the field, when peace activists had immense difficulties in their efforts to get visas to travel either to the West, or to other parts of the Arab world. For example, Zeinab told me that although she was chosen to be part of the MCC scholarship program, she was not granted a visa because she was Palestinian. Today, she holds a *Shengen visa* for the entire EU. In a similar vein, Rami recalls how difficult it was to travel within the Arab region, and how this difficulty was miraculously raised when the activists managed to get support from international or U.S.-based organizations such as the MCC (see further above).

Needless to say, these opportunities could only materialize for members of a burgeoning middle class, who could speak English or French, had studied in Western universities, or in prestigious ones in Lebanon, such as the American University of Beirut, and who could therefore live up to

the expectations of a transnational career. For the majority of Lebanese, these visa restrictions are still in place, and have been made even more strict after the events of September 11th, and in the wake of the anti-terrorism laws in the West.

Tribalization of justice

Contrary to what one might think, the tendencies towards transnationalization and technicalization of the field also brought about a particular approach to "culture", which reflected older, static and essentialist versions of the concept. In fact, it can be said that the trend toward technicalization produced a search for indigenous, "tribal" processes of feud resolution, which, in an anachronistic way, were labeled conflict resolution techniques, or even "alternative dispute resolution" (Safa 2007) For some of the proponents of this trend, these traditional efforts were also interpreted as an alternative for justice towards a "slow and corrupt court system" (Safa 2006:4).

Moreover, the rapid transnationalization of the field resulted in similar tendencies; instead of questioning the lack of justice mechanisms for the powerless, they promptly idealized "age-old rituals" and "traditions of settlement" as "very effective ways of dealing with conflicts" (Safa 2007, 5; Irani and Funk 2000). Thus, the ineffectiveness of the state justice system was not only taken for granted – Safa describes it as "very weak, in transition or mistrusted" for example, but it was perceived as something that gives the opportunity for "tribal practice" to blossom.

Interestingly, the same populations that traditionally enforced methods of feud resolution, were often the ones subjected to highly technical trainings in conflict resolution by the same experts who formerly praised them. For example, in a wide and intensive "training initiative" by a peace NGO in Mount Lebanon, a total of 90 villages, and hundreds of trainees, were "targeted" (Safa 2007). One of the aims of the workshops was to impart to trainees, tellingly labeled as "local civil society", the "necessary conflict transformation skills". These aims were followed through with the creation of clusters of "adjacent, confessionally-mixed communities", which participated in "meetings" and were asked to fill out "questionnaires".

Conclusion: Crisis and Discipline in Uncivil Societies

"Summer camp repairs rifts after Nahr al-Bared crisis", reads the title of an article that appeared on "The Daily Star", Lebanon's - English-speaking newspaper - on Friday, August 1st, 2008 (Daily Star 2008c). The five-day summer school, funded by the governments of Italy and Spain, was jointly organized by the *United Nations Development Program* (UNDP), the *Lebanese Center for Policy Studies* and the *Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee* (LPDC). The article quotes the organizers hailing the project, in which "young people from Lebanese and Palestinian communities were isolated in the mountains" and "encouraged to open a dialogue", as successful. The stated goal, which was to ease tensions between Palestinian residents of the refugee camp of *Nahr el Bared*, and Lebanese living around the camp, was said to be achieved. Indeed, a UNDP official from Spain is quoted as saying, "in five days they've been able to overcome these prejudices". For the participants and the donors alike, the workshop did succeed in mending the wounds that the "crisis of Nahr el Bared" had produced.[111]

Arguably, this is the final stage of a series of developments that this chapter has so far outlined. This article is centered around two main themes, namely *crisis* and the *workshop* (here referred to as 'summer camp'), which taken together seem to suggest a very particular reading not only of the events around the refugee camp of Nahr el Bared, but, one could add, more general patterns of violence and peacemaking in Lebanon's civil society today. Thus, the overall spirit, and the main argument of the article, reflect a growing tendency amongst peacemakers, namely, the idea that sudden eruptions of political violence must be understood as temporary crises that can be encountered with the wide application of workshops. In these workshops, the civil society can

[111] The *NaHr el bared* refugee camp is located in the North of Lebanon, close to the city of Tripoli (*Trablus*). In 2008, a group of armed men that used the camp as their retreat zone engaged in a number of clashes and ambushes with outposts of the Lebanese Army, which then held them under siege and eventually destroyed the entire refugee camp, killing many civilians.

"exchange views" (ibid.), receive training from specialists, and thus resolve the crisis through dialogue and mutual understanding.

On one hand, this example confirms the argument of this chapter about the increasing relevance that both the imaginary of crisis and the practice of workshop acquire in present-day Lebanon. It is telling that the main donors are 1) the *governments of Italy and Spain* - whose share in the total amount of development aid to Lebanon is among the highest annually and whose committed forces to the UN Peacekeeping Force in the South Lebanon (UNIFIL) top the list, 2) *UNDP*, the largest UN agency in Lebanon and among the most infuential in the entire UN system globally, and 3) the *Lebanese Center for Policy Studies*, one of the country's most established think tanks. Moreover, the story offers a straightforward empirical example, in which the imaginary and the practice, i.e. the crisis and the workshop, coalesce.

On the other hand, the story is paradigmatic of the implications from such developments, and especially about the role that the workshop increasingly plays in the efforts to define the overall problem and to design the response. Thus, a five-day-long workshop "in the mountains" is described as a "successful" measure to "repair the rifts" of a series of events that featured the Lebanese national army laying siege and shelling a refugee camp of 30,000 souls almost daily between May and September 2007.

Further, I would suggest to pay attention to the linguistic connotations. First, as a response to the *crisis*, Lebanese and Palestinians were "isolated" in the mountains. Then, it is truly remarkable, if not sarcastic, to suggest that for Palestinians, who are denied citizenship in Lebanon and, most probably, have spent most of their lives living in refugee camps, the best place in which they might "overcome their prejudices" is yet another *camp*, even if it is called a "summer camp." Note here how metaphors and words that otherwise might be part of the jargon of a military operation are strategic and constitutive of this practice. I would argue that these linguistic borrowings should not be underestimated. Rather, they highlight an essential aspect of the practice of the workshop, namely, that it is basically designed as a disciplinary mechanism.

Throughout the chapter, I described the conflict workshop as an assemblage of particular arrangements which aim at organizing (and finally disciplining) the ways that bodies behave, move and express feelings, opinions, and attitudes. These arrangements relate not only to the ways that space and movement within that space is regulated (and restricted, in the sense of "isolation", for example). In fact, making sure that the bodies involved are securely confined within a spatial arrangement that is both secluded and relatively away from familiar environments (as in the "mountains", in a "camp" of sorts, on Cyprus) is only the first element of the disciplinary logic. The next move is to divide the time available into slots, in which different tasks will and must be accomplished.

To be sure, these insights are not necessarily new. Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* has opened an enormous field of research, whose possibilities have been explored in different directions. My sole contribution to the study of disciplinary power is an essential aspect of the argument of this chapter, namely, that the conflict resolution workshop constitutes a disciplinary mechanism which, premised on a number of arrangements, aims at two particular aspects of subject formation: the *ethical* and the *technical*. In the first case, the *ethical self* is expected to develop those embodied attitudes and values that signal forgiveness, civility and "peacefulness." In the second case, the *technical self* is trained in the embodied skills, indeed the techniques, of dialogue and effective communication. In the workshop, it is the combined advancement of the ethical and the technical self that is expected to craft "peaceful beings" and, ultimately, better citizens.

This line of thoughts prompts us to go beyond the rhetoric of *repair* of wounds, which is what the organizers claim the workshop to be about. It points to another direction, that is the underlying ideas and assumptions about the human qualities and the general constitution of the individuals that are selected to take part in these workshops, as well as about the larger society of which they are members. Arguably, the image that guides these interventions is one of an ethically handicapped society and a society that finds itself in a generalized state of civil disintegration; hence, an *un*civil society. Notably, there is an interesting historical parallelism here. As Makdissi notes, during the rebellions of the Lebanese people (*ahali*) against their feudal rulers (*zuama*) in

the second part of the 19th century, the latter sought to construct the image of the former as being in a constant state of ignorance (ar. *jahel*). The proposed solution by the elites to this problem were massive campaigns of civil education through which the *ahali* were expected to become modern civil subjects (Makdissi 2000) and listen to the "wise ones". Yet, as with the educational campaigns more than hundreds years ago, today's workshops are deemed successful solely in the eyes of those who designed them.

Chapter Five Knowledge laisser-passer

Peace think tanks, crisis reports and expertise in post-9/11 Lebanon

Know thy self, know thy enemy.
A thousand battles, a thousand victories.
Sun Tzu, The Art of War

Introduction

In the previous chapter, titled 'An Uncivil Society,' I explored how the introduction, and widespread institutionalization, of a particular set of ideas and techniques of peacemaking at the level of the civil society during the 1990's, led to the creation of a distinct domain of peace professionals in Lebanon. As a result of this transformation, peace specialists tended to portray Lebanese civil society as in need of re-education and training in the technical skills of citizenship and in the moral principles of civility. In the present chapter, I examine the following decade (2000-2010), and, in particular, how the 9/11 attacks, and the subsequent U.S.-led *War on Terror*, shaped the practices of peace and crisis expertise in Lebanon, and beyond. To do so, I focus on the question of 'terrorism' as a *problem-space*, which I then ethnographically explore in relation to the emergence of the so-called peace think tank, and the complex controversies over the peculiar label 'Hizbollah scholarship.'

Within the globalized regime of representations and practices widely known as the War on Terror, the militant Islamist movement of Hizbollah (Party of God, in Arabic) – and, by extension, Lebanon as a whole - hold a rather central position. This has arguably certain historical roots. In 1983, the U.S. Army suffered one of the most deadly attacks on its Marines in one strike that it had ever experienced, in

Lebanon.[112] These attacks and the subsequent pressure from a growing resistance movement forced the U.S. army to withdraw from the country some months later. Although Hizbollah did not, and still does not, assume responsibility for the actions against the U.S. Marines, or the other attacks in 1982-83, some authors unequivocally attribute them to the party (Kramer 1987; Zisser 1996). Today, U.S. government officials include Hizbollah on the State Department's list of *Foreign Terrorist Organizations* mainly because of these actions (U.S. Department of State 2011).[113] Needless to say, this label is highly disputed among an array of actors within and beyond U.S. politics. For instance, the E.U. does not have the Lebanese party on its own list of *terrorist organizations*. And among the Lebanese, Hizbollah is regarded by some as a liberation movement, and by others as a 'state within a state,' but certainly not as a terrorist group.

The controversy over Hizbollah's nature, and the significance of the movement to Middle Eastern politics in general, has generated the need for extensive knowledge production. The latter includes a couple of genres, such as strictly academic research, journalistic articles, intelligence reports and special contributions by so-called security and terrorism experts. Yet, this literature is not uncontroversial either. As I demonstrate further below, at the heart of this second controversy we do not find the object at hand, but the *experts* on the object. It is not a controversy over Hizbollah, but over those who are said to *know* about it. Paraphrasing a term by Niklas Luhmann ('second-order observations' cf. 1993; 1998), one might speak here of *second order controversy*, namely, a controversy over the terms of the framing of the first controversy, and a dispute over the modus operandi of the initial dispute. Following Luc Boltanski's 'sociology of critique' (Boltanski 2011), I would contend that an anthropological investigation into second-order controversies is particularly important, not only because the latter often frame the ways in

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[112] On April 18, 1983, a suicide bomber blew up the U.S. embassy in Beirut. As a result, 61 people were killed and 120 wounded. Six months later, on October 23, the headquarters of the U.S. Marines and the French military forces in Beirut were attacked in a similar manner. 239 Marines and 23 French soldiers were killed; another one hundred were injured. A week later, on November 4, 1983, the Israeli Army headquarters in Tyre was hit. 29 soldiers and members of Israel's General Security Service were killed and tens more were wounded.

[113] But also because Israel, the major U.S. ally in the region, is facing a formidable military challenge on its northern borders by Hizbollah. In Lebanon, most people agree that the latter's continuous campaign of military and civilian action against Israel's occupation of south Lebanon led to the liberation of most of the occupied Lebanese territory in 2000.

which the *actual* controversies are played out. Moreover, such investigations could yield crucial insights about a wide range of 'anthropological problems' (Rabinow 2002), raised within the increasingly globalized politics of contemporary expertise.

As we will see further below, there is nothing self-evident about the label 'Hizbollah scholarship.' If there ever were such an object, it must be perceived as the contingent outcome of ongoing struggles over boundary making and the use of expert knowledge at large. In what follows, I use the controversy over that label as an entry point in order to ask questions about the ways in which different forms of expert knowledge are contextualized, institutionalized, discarded and re-appropriated in the age of terrorism. I take up this inadvertent object in an effort to explore, first, how it came to depict a distinct domain of expert knowledge, and second, how it became subject to diverse controversies over the scientific qualities of that very knowledge. Based on this strategy, I ask the following questions: How are forms of expertise on Hizbollah, and practices of knowledge production on socio-political violence reconfigured in post-9/11 Lebanon? How are they organized into particular techniques, organizational logics, and strategies? How are they perceived in relation to greater aims such as security, stability, state-building and peacemaking? And, by extension, how do these reconfigurations of knowledge relate to issues of contemporary anthropological concern, namely, to questions pertaining to the moral and technical constitution of humanity?

Before I embark on engaging with these questions, I wish to briefly sketch out my position vis-à-vis the current discourse in the expanding literature on terrorism. My first intention here is to question the peculiar persistence on what I call the scheme of *contamination* that informs much of the way in which the current controversies over the 'Hizbollah scholarship,' as well over the field of terrorism expertise in general, are framed. By contamination, I mean the habit to depict an initially pure entity (such as *literature*, *expertise*, or *academia*) as being, say, contaminated - in the sense of infiltrated, disoriented, misguided - by another, external, alien and inherently non-similar entity to the former (such as *terrorists, state,* or *intelligence agencies,* respectively). Second, and in direct relevance to the first, I wish to contribute to a more expanded understanding of the conceptual ground upon which most of the academic discussion about terrorism, and about terrorism experts, is taking place, by suggesting to regard the

former as a particular kind of *problem-space*, in which commentators, critics and observers are *nolens volens* partaking. Third, I contend that a tendency towards the use of largely unquestioned binaries, often premised on ideological or moral criteria, may inhibit us from focusing on the analytical and empirical implications of terrorism as a problem-space, within which knowledge is submitted to a host of practical rationalities and logics that are often overlooked.

To illustrate this last point, I make a departure from common frameworks in the study of the terrorism discourse (be they structural, ideological, moral) and look at certain practices of knowledge production within that problem space. One of these is the widespread practice of the *analysis-based report*, which I argue that it constitutes the main instrument of so-called crisis and peace think tanks today. My main argument is that the report exemplifies a particularly new configuration of knowledge within the problem-space of terrorism, which I suggest to call the *circulation approach*. This approach proposes that knowledge on terrorism and on socio-political violence in general must be produced locally and must circulate trans-locally, beyond the control of the state and any other restrictions. Thus, *circulation* designates a *laisser-faire* approach to knowledge and, as such, it stands in direct opposition to another approach that could be labelled *conquest*. The latter is usually associated with the idea that terrorism is, in fact, a battle field, and, thus, responses are best organized around the aim of the conquest of territory, either in military, symbolic or communicative terms. In the following pages, I present these two logics, while paying particular attention to those crucial practical and technical elements that constitute them. For example, in my exploration of the logic of *circulation*, I outline, and briefly describe, the features of what I regard as a new regime of security mapability that is made up of transnational circuits of *early warning mechanisms*, as well as quantified perceptions of the globe *at risk* and scientific research of the population's *support of terrorism*.

The argument proceeds in five main stages. At the outset, I situate my overall approach vis-à-vis a small selection from a vast literature on terrorism and terrorism experts. Focusing on these insightful studies, I argue for the need to go beyond the schema of *contamination*, as well as the image of the security expertise as an *interstitial* field between two neatly separated entities, i.e. the academia and the state. The second section begins with an ethnographic vignette, in which I show how a controversy over the

assassination of a Hizbollah commander in Damascus quickly turns into an open attack by Washington-based experts on the Middle East against what they call 'Hizbollah literature.' This is my entry to the analysis of the *conquest* approach. In the third part, I open with yet another ethnographic vignette, which plays out in a luxurious Beirut hotel, in which a group of other experts pledge to defend 'Hizbollah literature' against the D.C-based attacks. They argue for another approach in dealing with the phenomenon, premised mainly on the production of local knowledge and not on the practice of hostile labelling. This new perspective on knowledge is what I suggest to call the *circulation approach*. In the fourth section, I extend my argument to the think tank report, which I suggest to perceive as an exemplary *actuarial device* within the general logic of circulation. In the fifth section, in order to highlight the limits of the circulation approach, I present yet another controversy, which resulted in the firing of an expert from a peace think tank. In the conclusion, I offer some notes on the constitution of humanity in the light of my previous analysis on the uses of knowledge within the problem space of terrorism.

Terrorism as a Problem-Space: Conquest vs. Circulation

After 9/11, 'terrorism' became both a standard reference in our vocabulary and an unequivocal presence in the daily lives of millions of people around the globe. The U.S.-led *War on Terror* initiated an era in our history, in which massive amounts of material and mental resources were invested into the development of new technologies, and into the drafting of new legislation, that could – so we are told - make our lives safer.[114] Granted, the terrorism imaginary is powerful, because it is grounded on compelling representations and penetrating practices. Yet, this did not discourage its subjugation to critical appraisal with respect, for example, to the expanding securitization of our common worlds through the construction of threats that resulted in what Didier Bigo called the 'governmentality of

[114] We must be cautious, however, and not single out this era as exceptional. Attempts by states to build up repressive capacities as a response to internal or external threats have been commonplace since the inception of the modern state (cf. Tilly 1985).

unease' (Bigo and Tsoukala 2008).[115] Other critics have focused on the epistemological ramifications and, in particular, on the proliferation of a formidable academic field of experts, i.e. the so-called *terrorism expertise*. This kind of expertise, in turn, has been engulfed in a number of controversies over whether it should be regarded, not only as a field in its own right, but as an *academic field* to begin with (Herman and O'Sullivan 1989; Bryan, Kelly, and Templer 2011; Stampnitzky 2010).

I submit that a closer look at the latter debates reveals a striking similarity in the conceptual grounds from which both sides argue. In the controversy around the definition of terrorism, both proponents and adversaries of the label seem to agree - albeit for different reasons - that efforts to define the phenomenon at hand as 'terrorism' did not, and cannot, bear satisfactory results. For the former, as Lisa Stampinsky notes, "one of the most oft-noted difficulties has been the inability (…) to establish a suitable definition of the concept of 'terrorism' itself, with the result that practically every book, essay, and article on the topic has been compelled to take on this so-called 'problem of definition'" (Stampinsky op.cit., 3). On the other hand, critics of the label mainly point to what they regard as serious shortcomings in both its moral foundations (Asad 2010) as well as its analytical aspirations (Tilly 2004). Overall, many defenders of the label adopt what Stampnitzky calls the 'rhetoric of failure,' while most critics argue that the term has certainly failed to advance our understanding of current problems with violence and conflict. In brief, both seem to agree that 'terrorism' is – in one way or another - a "failed paradigm" (Bryan, Kelly, and Templer 2011).

The second controversy revolves around the field of *terrorism experts*. Stampnitzky shows that critics from either side, i.e. from both 'the left' and 'the right,' seem to agree that "the field" has been, say, contaminated through the overwhelming influence of an external entity. This external influence results in the loss of the field's independence and - by extension - of its academic credibility as a notable domain of knowledge production. Yet, they disagree on the source of the contamination. Thus, for the

[115] The literature on the consequences of the terrorism imaginary on the daily lives of millions is gargantuan. For a small selection in anthropology see (Mahmood 2001; Sluka 2008; Zulaika and Douglass 1996) Here, I am less interested in these questions, however. I am more concerned with the productive uses of terrorism in epistemological fields.

left it is the state and its security agencies that set the agenda for the field (Chomsky 2001; Herman and O'Sullivan 1989; Herman 1982), while the right believes that the field is often reproducing the propaganda of the terrorists (Smith and Jones 2006).

Taken together, these perspectives seem to re-enforce a series of all too abstract assumptions (the schema of contamination, the rhetoric of failure, the image of an interstitial field, to name but a few) that can be interrogated through a more empirically grounded approach. This is what I am aiming at here, and for the purposes of my argument, I will mainly focus on those arguments in these debates that I find most empirical in conceptual terms. In particular, I attempt a closer reading of three texts already quoted above, namely, Talal Asad's 'Thinking about Terrorism and Just War' (2010); Charles Tilly's 'Terror, Terrorism, Terrorists' (2004) and Lisa Stampnitzky's 'Disciplining an Unruly Field: Terrorism Experts and Theories of Scientific/Intellectual Production' (2010). The first two texts can be said to have been active participants in the initial controversy over the label's empirical use in analytical and in moral frameworks respectively, while the third text offers an ethnographic approach of the second-order controversy, i.e. the dispute over the field of terrorism experts.

Despite the fact that the authors argue from diverse perspectives and often, if not always, speak to entirely different audiences, the texts share some striking similarities that I find worth tackling. The first commonality is the assumed relationship of the author vis-à-vis his/her object of engagement. Thus, all three claim, albeit not explicitly, the position of the outsider. The second common element, which somehow resonates with the first, is that in order to introduce their argument, all three authors rely extensively on different variations of the conceptual metaphor of 'space' and the adjacent *grammar* (in the Wittgensteinian sense) of this metaphor, such as "interstitial," "borders," "overlap," "bounded," etc. To illuminate both points, I quote a characteristic passage from each text:

> "The overall thesis I present in this article is that the tendency to moralize war and terrorism, to stake so much on intention, obscures the fact that there is a *space of violence* shared by 'war' and 'peace,' by 'ruthless terrorism' and 'just war,' and that that space is embraced by the liberal tradition." (Asad 2010, 3; emphasis added)

> "This essay argues the following points (…): The word terror points to a widely recurrent but *imprecisely bounded political strategy*. We can reasonably define that strategy as asymmetrical deployment of threats and violence against enemies using means that *fall outside* the forms of political struggle routinely operating within some current regime." (Tilly 2004, 5; emphasis added)

> "I suggest that terrorism studies, rather than conforming to the notion of an ideal-typical profession, discipline, or *bounded 'intellectual field,'* instead represents *an interstitial space* of knowledge production." (Stampnitzky 2010, 1; emphasis added)

Asad, to begin with, takes up and interrogates the rationale and the practical consequences behind the renewed interest among academicians in 'just war' theory. In doing so, he convincingly questions the "essential difference" between war as civilized, humanized violence, which is subjected to rules, laws and moral values, on one hand, and terrorism as barbaric violence, on the other. Asad argues that in today's world, 'just wars' and 'terror acts' are not clearly demarcated, nor can peace be clearly differentiated from war. Instead, we shall speak of a single 'space of violence' that cannot be easily permeated by any moral rules or laws of war. Within this space, state violence and terrorist violence are often indiscriminate.

Tilly cautions against possible reifications of the terms terror, terrorism, and terrorists for analytical purposes. He urges scholars to doubt the "existence of a distinct, coherent class of actors (terrorists), who specialize in a unitary form of political action (terror) and thus should establish a separate variety of politics (terrorism)" (ibid., 3). While these terms may be politically powerful in serving normative ends, they are analytically elusive. Tilly regards terror primarily as a *strategy* that can be adopted by "a remarkable array of actors" (ibid.) and, suggests, therefore, an alternate analytical view to incorporate this idea. His suggestion rests on a two-fold distinction: first, between "violent specialists" and non-specialists, and second, between actors who deploy terror within their "own operating territories," and those who direct it elsewhere (ibid., 11). This double differentiation, based on different combinations of the variables *specialization* and

territory, demarcates four ideal types: 'militias' (home territory/specialists), 'autonomists' (home territory/non-specialists), 'conspirators' (outside home territory-specialists) and 'zealots' (outside home territory/non-specialists). These ideal types occupy "the four corners of a two-dimensional space" (ibid.).

Arguably, both Tilly and Asad understand terrorism in terms of a *singular presence* that stretches beyond the boundaries of taken-for-granted entities. Asad's *single space of violence* transcends morally neat categories, such as 'just wars' and 'terror acts,' and appears to be instrumental for different forms of violence committed (also) by liberal states. Tilly's idea of *terror as a strategy* traverses bounded analytical domains and, instead, assigns actors with different grades of specialization in violent methods and forms of territorial expansion. To be sure, these are quite suggestive arguments. Yet, both Tilly and Asad remain somewhat faithful to a particular understanding of terrorism as a certain kind of substance that truly exists somewhere *out there*. Thus, either when we think of terror as a strategy that falls "outside the forms of political struggle routinely operating within some current regime" (Tilly, op.cit) or of terrorism as "the construction of 'threat', the identification of its source, and the response that is appropriate to it" (Asad, ibid.), we always think of it as a somewhat coherent presence that is *identifiable* and, therefore, distinguishable from other kinds of strategies and other forms of threats that do not possess the *qualities* of terror. Thus, terrorism is grasped as a form of substance that exists as such, only waiting for the social scientist to recognize and analyze it from the external point that s/he stands.

However, apart from the immanent risk of essentialization, this approach runs perhaps the danger of taking terrorism as something that it is not, at least, not primarily: a coherent presence with immanent qualities that initially and principally revolves around *violence* (in form of a type of strategy, a kind of threat, etc.). I would argue, instead, that the all too common link of terrorism with violence lies rather at the end of diverse efforts to *know* about terror, and not at the beginning. In brief, terrorism is less about violence, than about knowledge. In arguing this, I build on recent literature that suggests that globalization might be understood as a particular kind of a *problem-space*, in which contemporary 'anthropological questions' are framed (cf. Collier and

Ong 2005, 5). These questions refer to "an interest in the constitution of the social and biological existence of human beings as an object of knowledge, technical intervention, politics, and ethical discussion." (ibid., 6).

I concur that terrorism could be regarded in similar ways. We might have good reasons to regard terrorism as a problem-space, in which moral, technical and political questions about the limits, the features and the overall constitution of our contemporary humanity may be raised. As such, it might even be said to constitute the very conceptual ground, upon which arguments like the ones by Asad and Tilly can be introduced in the first place. In other words, terrorism as a problem space enables certain ways of asking certain kinds of questions about certain kinds of phenomena. If, indeed, terrorism is a kind of *space,* as Tilly and Asad argue, then I would suggest to regard it as primarily a *space of knowledge and problematization*, in which particular sets of questions about the contemporary status of humanity are admitted and in which particular sets of answers in relation to our will to know about terror are allowed.[116]

Hence, and as a way to tackle the third text, can we say that terrorism is a "field of knowledge production," as Lisa Stampinzky (op.cit) suggests? Yes and no, I would say, depending on how we understand *knowledge*. If knowledge is the sum of those different *strategies of knowing* that are constantly invented, evaluated, compared and applied within the problem-space of terrorism, then *yes*. But if knowledge is regarded as the exclusive product of a certain institutionalized and defined domain of terrorism expertise, we run the risk of both missing important non-institutionalized parameters, as well as of taking the experts' own claims for granted. Arguably, the sole focus on processes of institutionalization and professionalization ends up producing a rather essentialized image of the 'field' in question. Academic discussions around the so-called 'critical terrorism studies' might help to illustrate this last point. Adherents of this relatively recent strand claim to wish to foster "a more self-reflective, critical approach to the study of terrorism," and to bring in those, who study aspects of terrorism, but are not adopting the

[116] For an elaboration of the concept of 'problematization', see chapter One.

"ontological, epistemological, and ideological commitments of existing terrorism studies" (Breen Smyth et al. 2008, 2). However, apart from the important observation that any attempt to study terrorism frequently falls within normative perceptions (Burke 2008), the entire idea of a 'critical terrorism studies' seems to be grounded on the premise that terrorism is a stand-alone object that, first, exists *per se* and, second, can be approached (note the verb) *critically*. To do so, the *critics* must only secure a …critical distance vis-à-vis the object. Yet, as Luc Boltanski (Boltanski 2011; Boltanski and Thévenot 1999) has argued against the Bourdieusian project of a 'critical sociology,' such perception is not only ethically problematic (because it presupposes that the scholar possesses critical capacities that the actors, whom she observes, do not), but it is also analytically flawed, since it rests upon taken-for-granted binaries, such as *micro* vs. *macro* (in the structure of society), *high* vs. *low* (in the distribution of power), *inside* vs. *outside* (of the activity of criticism).

In a similar vein, Stampinzsky's conceptualization of the field of terrorism expertise as an 'interstitial space' can be said to presuppose and to reiterate an image of the academia and the state (especially the latter's security agencies) as two purely distinct entities that must and can be kept apart both in analytical and in normative terms. However, apart from the fact that there have always been different forms of ties and contacts between state (security) agencies and academia (as one celebrated 'terrorism expert' reprimanded me when I suggested such a distinction in a Helsinki conference in 2007), this approach arguably misses the point of how terrorism works as a problem-space: terror expertise is not organized around, say, Bourdieusian concepts of the 'field' (1993), but rather through different kinds of strategies and practices to *know about terror*. Moreover, and crucially, these strategies and practices must not necessarily be attributed to certain actors, but may even be regarded as *actants* themselves (Latour 1996). As such, they are not to be classified in ideological or moral terms, such as left and right, liberal and conservative, humanist or hawkish. In what follows, I suggest a focus on organizational logics that permeate the problem space of terrorism, and in some of the practical consequences that derive from their application.

To do so, I take my cue from Foucault, who in his 1979 lecture series titled 'Security, Territory, Population' (2009) offered the following differentiation between the apparatuses of law and of security, as distinct *strategies to know*:

> "In the system of the law, what is undetermined is what is permitted; (…) In the apparatus of security (...) what is involved is precisely not taking either the point of view of what is prevented or the point of view of what is obligatory, but standing back sufficiently so that one can grasp the point at which things are taking place, whether or not they are desirable. This means trying to grasp them at their nature, or let's say – this word not having the meaning we now give it – grasping them at the level of their effective reality." (2009, 46-47)

Stephen Collier (2009) has convincingly pointed out that this analysis of the different ways through which distinct strategies of power/knowledge may function in a synchronic framework is an important shift compared to Foucault's earlier, quasi epochal, and rather rigid, conceptualization of these apparatuses in absolutely successive, chronological terms. In the 1979 lectures, Foucault draws a more complex picture, in which different apparatuses of power - sovereignty, discipline, and security - may co-exist within a common historico-political space and even address the same questions. Arguably, this more nuanced, comparative perspective allows for a sharper understanding of how diverse logics of knowledge may overlap and adapt to each other within a single problem-space.

Inspired from these insights, I propose an analytical differentiation between two main approaches to knowledge within the problem-space of terrorism: *conquest* and *circulation*. The first approach designates the enemy as a distinctly hostile entity that must be defeated. Consequently, it organizes knowledge around the aim of the conquest of *territory* in military and communicative terms. It can be also described as a legalistic approach, because it is premised on the power of the sovereign to decide what is to be prohibited/punished and what to be allowed. The latter approach is not concerned with the framing of the enemy in hostile terms, but with generating mechanisms for the free circulation of knowledge and the regulatory effects that this might have on problems

of socio-political violence. The major aim of the circulation approach is to produce and disseminate knowledge of the phenomenon in question in its *reality*, without resorting to distortions. Thus, it does not work through legalistic bans and strict labels, but through the idea that the production and dissemination of accurate knowledge can bring about the desired outcomes, namely, the elimination of terrorist violence.

Controversy Part I: *Assassinated* Terrorists and *Contaminated* Experts

On February 12, 2008, around 11:00 p.m., a car bomb went off in the Damascus neighborhood of *Kfar Suseh*.[117] The bomb instantly killed *Imad Mughniyeh*, alias *Hajj Radwan*, a top military commander of Lebanon´s Hizbollah. The event made global news with lightning speed. Media networks, newspapers and blogs specializing in the Middle East rushed to report and comment on it. Yet, they seemed hesitant to supply more concrete information on the event apart from the name and the identity of the perished, adding that "in this murky area, hard facts are more difficult to come by than speculation and misinformation" (Black 2008).[118] And indeed, the assassination brought about debate among journalists, pundits on the Middle East, and other experts, who ventured to clarify those „hard facts." For a couple of days onwards, the *Mughniyeh case* would feature centrally in expert discussions, as well as in media outlets around the globe.

One particular media outlet took special care in the reporting and commentary on the assassination. The day after the event, the think tank *MESH* (*Middle East Policy at Harvard)* published on its website an opinion piece suggesting that Syria's intelligence agencies may be behind the act (Alterman 2008). The suggestion was based on the hypothesis that such an act could serve as a potential "olive branch from Syria to the West," which should then be interpreted

[117] For an excellent historical account of the car bomb, see (Davis 2007).

[118] This quote is however accompanied by the following sentence: "…but some reports have suggested Mughniyeh was in charge of Hizbollah's operations abroad, including attacks on Israeli and Jewish targets in Latin America in the 1990s." The author, however, does not quote any of the reports.

as part of the former's shift in foreign policy, now focusing on rapprochement with Western powers. In other words, the olive branch (note the cynicism here) from Syria comes in the form of the sacrifice of its close ally's top commander in a car bomb killing.

Yet, the very moment that MESH experts were speculating about Syria's potential role in the killing, the U.S. administration openly welcomed it. The State Department spokesman said: "The world is a better place without this man in it. He was a coldblooded killer, a mass murderer and a terrorist responsible for countless innocent lives lost. One way or another he was brought to justice" (McCormack quoted in: Sturcke 2008). In Beirut, Hizbollah's Secretary General, Hassan Nasrallah, in a televised speech accussed Israel´s secret services for the assassination, and spoke of the commander as a martyr (ar. *shahid*), thus clearly embracing him as one of Hizbollah's own.[119] After these utterances, and although no state or agency admitted to having been behind the act, the MESH experts decided to drop the Syria-scenario: "Given what we know now, the simplest answer is probably the correct one" (Alterman 2008, op. cit.), the same expert noted only some hours later on the same website. Everything seemed to be in place: the answer in its "simplest" form, and the terrorist brought to "justice."

Still, this was only the beginning of the story for the MESH experts. In fact, the Mughniyeh case was only now becoming really interesting. Two days after the assassination, a follow-up piece appeared on the MESH website titled ‚Imad Who?' (Kramer 2008). In the piece, Martin Kramer, a well-known expert on Middle East affairs, pursued to hit two birds with one stone: to verify the terrorist nature of Hizbollah and to lament the incompetence of what he called the 'literature' on the former. According to Kramer, the party's full endorsement of Mughniyeh provided enough

[119] Secretary-General of Hizbollah, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah held a speech on Mughniyeh's assassination, in which he declared that "The Zionists see in the martyrdom of Hajj Imad a great achievement." February 14, 2008. Apparently, since the 1990s the Israeli intelligence services have attempted a few times to kill Mughniyeh, who figured on the FBI's *most wanted terrorists* list with a $5m (£2.5m) bounty on his head. "Israel had an account to settle with Mughniyeh", Eyal Zisser, an Israeli academic expert, told Al-Jazeera TV (quoted in "The Guardian" op.cit.). But the same expert noted that the Lebanese fugitive was wanted by 42 other countries. Israel officially denied being behind the killing.

evidence to confirm that, first, it is a terrorist organization and, second, the ‘literature‘ on it has failed in asserting it.

Arguanbly, the first assertion was premised on a rather tautological logic. Kramer inserted that since *Imad Mughniyeh* was undoutedbly a “terrorist,“ whom Hizbollah endorsed as one of its martyrs, then Hizbollah is also terrorist: “If Hizbollah were absolutely determined to distance itself from the terror tag, it wouldn’t have accorded an official send-off to a most-wanted terrorist,” he wrote. Yet, this is a rather circular argument, especially when bearing in mind that the party is already considered a “terrorist organization” by the U.S. administration, which is the same agency that declared Mughniyeh to be a “terrorist.” There is no reason to believe that if Hizbollah would have disowned Mughniyeh, it would have effectively “distanced” it from the “terror tag,” since it was not the party that could decide on it, but rather the US administration and other Western powers.

The second assertion deserves more attention, because it has more interesting repercussions on the politics of knowledge in the age of terrorism. Kramer launched a direct attack on the ‘literature,‘ because it had not been able to successfully reveal Mughniyeh´s high ranking within the party hierarchy: “The ‘literature’ is rife with claims that Mughniyeh didn’t really belong to Hizbollah, or he answered to Iran, or he had his own agenda—anything to dissociate his terrorist acts from the party” (inverted commas in original). For Kramer, the ‘literature‘ must be placed within quotes, because it did not meet the standards of truth production. Instead, it was inherently wrong and misguided, a result of being tricked by the object of study: *“*Hiding the clandestine branch protects (Hizbollah) from its enemies makes it easier to sell the movement to useful idiots in the West, who insist that the movement hasn’t done any terror in years, and maybe never did any at all.” (ibid.) The experts are nothing but “useful idiots,“ because they could not see what the movement could hide well. The literature is incompetent, says Kramer, and should not be trusted.

Echoing Kramer, a Lebanese-American columnist took up the assault. Michael Young endorsed the charges of expert incompetence, but rushed to add that this was the overall result of the

deliberate manipulation of experts by the object: “This is emblematic of a wider problem. Hizbollah has been very adept at turning contacts with the party into a supposedly valuable favor. Scholars, particularly in the West, who can claim to have a Hizbollah contact are already regarded as ‘special‘ for having penetrated a closed society, so that readers are less inclined to judge critically the merits of what the scholars got out of Hizbollah” (Young on Kramer 2008). For him, the problem with scholars, particularly in the West, who write on Hizbollah, is basically a problem of contamination. Since Hizbollah is a closed society, it can be only penetrated by those who adhere to the entry rules. The ones who are willing to do so are effectively turned into spokespersons for the party, while the unsuspicious readers regard them highly. This makes the readers less critical towards those scholars, who are trading off favorable coverage of the party for privileged access to it. Hizbollah is thus able to contaminate the “literature“ through the means of controlling and manipulating scholarly access to itself.

Some days later, Young repeated at home the attack against the “alleged Hizbollah experts“ in an op-ed for Lebanon’s most circulated English-speaking newspaper, *The Daily Star* (Young 2008). The piece reiterated the already familiar charge of contamination, albeit in a more polemic tone: “Recently, when the Hizbollah commander Imad Mughniyeh was assassinated in Damascus, the collateral damage was felt in academic departments, newsrooms, think-tanks and cafes far and wide“ (ibid.). Again, the killing of the commander initiated a series of events that exposed the contamination of experts by the terrorist entity. Academics, journalists, and think tank researchers were perceived as suspect for being manipulated by the party’s strategy to grant access in exchange for a favorable portrayal. The closer they have come, the more possible the contamination they underwent, and therefore the less credible their expertise must be regarded. Indeed, Young‘s war was waged with utmost verocity against alleged Hizbollah experts, who – now depicted as “plenty of fools“ - were not seen as merely incompetent, in the sense of Kramer’s “useful idiots,“ but instead as highly dependent on, and thus manipulated by, their very object*:* “..as the Mughniyeh case showed, when Islamists dominate the debate affecting them, there are plenty of fools out there dying to be tossed a bone“ (ibid.).

What does this story tell us about the politics of expertise and the conundrums of scholarship in an age of terrorism? What can it highlight about the increasingly complex power structures pertinent to contemporary expert networks, when extra-juridical assasinations in a Damascene neighborhood serve as the primary foundation for a team of Harvard-based experts to launch a bashing campaign against what they designate as 'Hizbollah scholars'?[120] And, by extension, how are these struggles constituted on the material and on the institutional level? What sorts of techno-political elements are essential in order to wage them? What lies at the core of the constitution of the oppossing camps?

Conquest: Terrorism, Territory, Otherness

> "We could say that if the traditional problem of sovereignty (…) had in the past always been either that of conquering new territories or holding on to conquered territory, then its problem was in a way: How can it remain constant, or how can I expand my territory without it changing? (…) In the end this is Machiavelli's problem, in fact." (Foucault 2009, 65)

What kind of a *Machiavellian problem* does the terrorist pose to the sovereign? How is the terrorist ontology and epistemology defined in terms of the sovereign's concern of conquest? Which is the territory that the sovereign must defend against the terrorist threat? How does the sovereign choose to secure the safety of the territory? These questions have, to be sure, multiple answers that may differ according to the historico-political context within which they are posed. In the contemporary context of Lebanon, these questions are crucially pertinent to the ways in which different kinds of experts deal with the phenomenon of Hizbollah. Arguably, the lively

[120] Note here that this label can be read in a two-fold manner, namely, the scholars *on* Hizbollah, which means those who research it, and the scholars *of* Hizbollah, which means those who belong to it, who are favorable to it.

expert debate around the latter encapsulates the current contours of a globalized controversy in its Lebanese version.

In what follows, I analyse some of these contours along with the practical consequences that they may have on a number of levels. I differentiate between two main themes: The ontological Otherness of the terrorist vis-à-vis the sovereign and the role of experts in securing the conceptual boundary between the terrorist and the sovereign.

Killing *An-Other*

In 1979, the British band *The Cure* released their first single called 'Killing An Arab.' The song's writer, Robert Smith, was inspired by Albert Camus' existentialist novel '*L'Étranger' (The Stranger),* which was partly written against the French colonialization of Algeria, and of the absurdity and inhumanity that this produced. Despite its anti-war, and ultimately, anti-racist origins, the song became extremely controversial in the decades to come, since it was often (ab-)used by right-wing groups in the West to incite violence and to express racist sentiments against Arabs. The controversy received further momentum after the 9/11 attacks, and eventually *The Cure* was forced to perform the song with changes in the title ever since. In 2005, it was sung as 'Kissing an Arab' and one year later, as 'Killing Another.' The last version seemed to have settled the controversy, since it was believed to disallow possible racist usage of the song.[121]

The reason why I refer to this controversy has less to do with the acoustic resemblance between 'An Arab' and 'An other' that obviously allows it to be used interchangeably in rock concerts. I am more interested in the consequences of a settled controversy over the label *An-Other*. What does it say about our current ethical sensibilities, when the phrase 'killing an Arab' becomes

[121] However, many of the band's fans were not happy with this. On websites, fans were debating, and trying to discern, which version was preferred in which concert by the band and why. See http://www.cureconnections.com/the-cure-chat/10904-killing-an-arab-vs-killing-another.html

fodder for racist manipulations, while the phrase 'killing Another' is considered rather normal within the realm of artistic freedom of expression? But isn't it that in times of extensive Islamophobia, the Other is indeed the 'Arab,' whose killing can be taken for granted?

Similar thoughts might come to mind if one considers the reaction of the State Department spokesperson on the event of the assassination of Imad Mughniyeh. The representative of the planet's most powerful state welcomes the extra-juridical killing as a legitimate and accepted path to justice. Arguably, this form of justice delineates both the kind of the criminal, and the nature of the crime that one is faced with. Sovereign, conquest-inspired justice is not only placed beyond and above the moral and normative domain of the law, as Agamben said (1998), but it also seeks to position the adversary below the ontological domain of the human, namely at the level of the *beast*, as Derrida argued (2009). Within the conquest approach, the terrorist becomes that very beast, and a creature that lacks rationality, compassion, humanity, *humanness*. Thus, justice is identified with the form of punishment usually reserved only for those who do not belong to humanity: to be killed without trial.

To be sure, the conquest-oriented form of justice is most often encountered in the colony. In the colonial imagination, civilization is perceived as "locked in a deadly struggle with wildness" (Zulaika and Douglass 1996, 150), with terrorism being the "latest embodiment of this old theme" (ibid.). Terrorists are thus dogs, snakes, wild, irrational, barbarians, at best, the embodiments of the 'Wild Man' either 'within' (White 1972) or as a constitutive part of the 'colonial mirror' (Taussig 1984; 1987). Edmund Leach - one of the first anthropologists to speak about terrorism - differentiated between "the vast majority of wars," in which the enemy was "someone you could respect" on one hand, and the 'wars of conquest' that aimed at the capture of slaves, or the establishment of colonial settlements, on the other (Leach 1977). In these latter wars, the conquerors looked upon their enemies as "people wholly unlike (them), mere animals, towards whom no ordinary rules of courtesy and fair play need apply" (ibid., 25). There is something inherent in terms such as 'terroristic massacre' and 'cannibalism,' says Leach, that serve a sort of political opportunism, which renders the opponents virtuous, or monstrous, "as a matter of

convenience." Caught up in this spiral of moral self-virtuousness, the belief in the lack of common moral values is so complete that the Other is then categorised as a wild animal. From this point onwards, "every imaginable form of terroristic atrocity is not only attributed to the other side but becomes permissible for oneself" (ibid., 36).[122]

Certainly, not all conquest-oriented accounts downgrade the terrorist to the level of animal. Often, terrorists are depicted as those hybrid creatures caught between modernity and tradition. As other 'primitive rebels' (Hobsbawm 1959), terrorists are frequently thought to be "pre-political people," who "do not as yet grow with or into modern society: they are broken into it, or more rarely (...) they break into it." (ibid., 2). Hobsbawm suggests that socio-historical movements, such as the 'social banditry', Sicily's *Mafia*, and the *Millenarian movements* in Andalusia (anarchists), or in Italy (the *Lazzaretti*), have a fundamental hybridity between the two antithetical conditions of the *modern* and the *arhaic* in common.[123] Even if not always explicitly put in such antithetical terms, there seem to be other binaries in abundance through which a similarly fundamental Otherness of the Islamic movements can be expressed today; in the words of Talal Asad (2003), the shifting web of concepts that makes up the Islamist *anti-modern* today includes binaries, such as secular/religious, global/parochial, and rational/irrational.

To be sure, such binaries are often applied to describe Hizbollah and other similar Islamic movements across the Middle East. For example, in one of the most widely read books on the party (Norton 2009), the opening chapter takes the reader to the small southern Lebanese city of *Nabatiyeh*, where the local population celebrates the Shi'ite Islamic ritual of *Ashoura.* Central to the narrative is the description of the practice of self-flagellation that often leads to extensive

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[122] Indeed, the expert literature on terrorism and anti-terrorism is often replete with animalistic metaphors that seek to place the Other within the ontological domain of the non-human. For instance, a behemothic (800 pages-long) publication by the *United States Institute of Peace* that presents the lessons of contemporary conflict resolution is entitled *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World* (Crocker, Hampson, and Aall 2007).

[123] Yet, his Marxist perspective finally acknowledges the "always modern" nature of these movements: "However, words like 'primitive' and 'archaic' should not mislead us. The movements discussed in this book all have considerable historical evolution behind them, for they belong to a world which has long known the State (...), class differentiation and exploitation." (ibid.p.3).

bleeding. Arguably, this introduction sets the conceptual ground for the entire argument of the book and situates the party's ideological and political platform in direct relation to the cultural reading of that ritual. The prominent place in which the Ashoura ritual takes in the book serves to emphasize the central position of *culture* (in its wider traits, such as the 'culture of martyrdom,' the tradition of ruralism and the continuation of ancient ritualism) in Hizbollah's ideology and practice.[124] The localized nature of the movement is implicitly contrasted to the universality of notions, such as modernity and rationality that know no territorial boundaries. Often, *Nabatiyeh*, and Hizbollah's stronghold, the southern district of Beirut *Dahiyeh*, come to embody the archetypal topoi of cultural authenticity, and of anti-modernity in Lebanon.[125]

But, as Leach further suggested, the terrorist is also an "inverted ruler" (ibid.).[126] For instance, Hizbollah is often defined, perceived and analyzed primarily through the frame of an ontological antithesis and incompatibility with the Lebanese state. Characteristically, the most common misnomer used by experts is the "state within a state:" As I discuss in Chapter Two, this label results in what I have called the discursive practice of alienation.[127] The seemingly neutral notion of "state within a state" does not refer to the party's extended network of social welfare and social security organizations for example, the efficiency of which have been unaminously

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[124] The theme of a 'culture of martyrdom' was widely applied on the eve of the Iranian revolution by Western media (Said 1997).

[125] One of Hizbollah's spokespersons complained to me that the *Dahiyeh* is often compared to "slums" by Western journalists, while he described it as nothing but a "typical middle-class district:" (Interview Ibrahim Mussawi, Beirut). These topoi are perceived as resisting modernization, globalization, and, even, rationality. Discussions on the Sicilian Mafia appear to bear striking similarities. See Deborah Puccio-Den (EHESS), 'Mafia: History of a Theorem,' presentation at the Department of anthropology, University of Zurich, 11.03.2010.

[126] Durkheim (1933) has noted that the production of state authority, and the law as an expression of its sovereignty, is dependent on the production of an unlawful underside of the state (Hansen/Steputat 305). Asad asks why killings by non-state actors produce inherently more horror than those committed by states (Asad 2009).

[127] Often, the same effect is produces an antithesis, which is often expressed in the form of state law vs. customary, or simply non-state law: "Mafias are both more permanent and more powerful, since they are less a series of individual revolts and more of an institutionalized system of a law outside the official law. In extreme cases they may amount to a virtual parallel or subsidiary system of law and power to that of the official rulers. Being extremely archaic and pre-political, banditry and Mafia are difficult to classify in modern political terms" (Hobsbawm 1959, 6).

acknowledged by friends and foes.[128] It implies, rather, the existence of competing legal structures, claims of citizenship, loyalty ties, understandings of territoriality, and also ontological formations.

Eliminating Ambiguity

In his treatise on terrorism, Edmund Leach asks whether and how "the traditional anthropological analysis of primitive law and custom helps us in any way to understand the contemporary phenomenon of terroristic political violence" (op.cit., 6). In particular, he invites us to focus on those "ambiguous" entities that do not fit into neatly organised categories of classification. In major classificatory systems, like religion, kinship or cosmology, the ambiguous entity occupying the overlap area between two categories is often perceived as *abnormal*, and thus treated in a very special manner. It is highly respected, but also deeply dreaded, since it is regarded as possessing metaphysical powers to mediate between the two otherwise clearly separated categories. In politics, says Leach, the ambiguous entity is the ruler that mediates between the individual and the society at large by virtue of a legitimate authority delegated by the latter. If you turn this formula back to front and make the flow of power start running "the wrong way," society would be ruled by the "criminal terrorist" by virtue of an illegitimate authority delegated by a functional group of revolutionaries (ibid.) Therefore, the fight against ambiguity is crucial, says Leach.

This seems to be the credo of MESH experts, I would add. Access to Hizbollah means that ambiguity is on the rise, and with it, the risk of contamination. Academic efforts to understand Hizbollah can be easily turned into justification of murderous actions. Hence, what is needed are

[128] For an anthropological refutation of culturalized images on Hizbollah, see (Deeb 2006) and for different accounts of the history and the politics of the movement see (Harik 2005; Saad-Ghorayeb 2002). For the movement's social policies see among others (Betts 2005; Fawaz 2009; Flanigan and Abdel-Samad 2009; Karagiannis 2009; Mervin 2008).

clear-cut divisions, rigid boundaries, and well-defined categories in order to make sure that the terrorist's insurgent powers will not spill over. Ambiguity must be thus addressed, targeted and eliminated. This is exactly the task that experts are expected and called upon to accomplish. Their task is simple: they must encounter the trickster, disarm it of its hybrid ambiguity by placing it resolutely on the other side of the border, and cancel its ability to mediate between the categories. The MESH experts know well that this is an immensely risky task, if not an altogether impossible one. It requires border patrols, namely, manned teams of experts that supervise the border and make sure that the crossings are hermetically sealed. Proximity to the border, and the hybrid, is a double-edged sword, since it may bring about credibility, but also suspicion. There is always the threat of double agents, hence the alarm sounded by the MESH experts. Thus, patroling the border requires the additional task of filtering the manned teams, supervise their routes and practices, expel double agents, even engage in self-disciplining. These activities are part of the task of ‚purifying' (Latour 1993) the border from false guards and fake patrols.[129]

Controversy Part II: In Defense of 'Hizbollah Scholarship'

> "Before we begin, I would like to explain the context behind the idea of holding the meeting. It was really that both James and I, who is sitting up there on the panel, (…) noticed that there was a slight outpouring of comments, which were largely related to reasons for the assassination of Imad Mughniyeh in Damascus, which questioned the whole direction of Hizbollah's discourse (…) We wondered whether commentators, pundits and scholars had gone astray, and perhaps misjudged the diversions of Hizbollah's language of some years ago, and the language in the middle period and the language of the end period.

[129] Yet, since Fredrik Barth, anthropologists have shown that borders are not only, and not always, sites of restriction and prohibition (Barth 1969). They are much more places where identities are transmogrified and creatively transformed, ideas traverse and transgress, individuals interact and transmute (Eyal 2008).

> As you know, when you set a title for a talk you are constrained by space, so the title is a little bit one-sided when it refers to the scholarship on Hizbollah, and the assassination of Imad Mughniyeh, but of course it is probably unrealistic to tackle the subject due to a missing element in the title. What I mean is that whatever happened to the discourse on Hizbollah, or any other Islamic movement for that matter, didn't really take place in a vacuum. (...) I think, in its essence it is very difficult to tackle this without examining the scholarship not only of those who examine Hizbollah but those who examine the policies, and the language and the discourse of Western policy over this period in regard to Islamist movements (…) and perhaps try to pull out what is the relation in this endless - of course- play of chicken and egg. But that was the idea behind the meeting."

These words, uttered by Paul, a Beirut-based British mediation expert, launched the panel discussion titled 'The Mughniyah assassination and Hizbollah scholarship.' The event took place in Beirut on March 13, 2008, around 6:00 p.m. local time. This was almost exactly one month after Imad Mughniyeh was assassinated in Damascus. Paul delivered his short opening speech standing next to, and slightly in front of, the rest of the panellists, who were seated behind him. The panellists consisted of two Lebanese university professors, and two U.S. journalists, all based in Beirut. Each panellist, Paul included, had published on Hizbollah.

The overall atmosphere was official, rather typical of think tank events in Beirut. Like others I had attended, this one also took place in a formally decorated conference room in one of Beirut's luxury hotels. At the entrance to the room, a young, blond, Western-looking girl welcomed every visitor with a smile and the conference program. She also asked us to kindly write down on a list our names and the institutions we represent, and to put our "business cards" in a silver tray in front of her. Inside the room, a few dozen chairs in rows were facing the four speakers and the panel coordinator. The audience - not more than 40 individuals - was comprised mostly of people in formal dress. I already knew some from diverse researchers' circles, but I did not know most of them. Judging from the ferocity of their note-taking, I would guess that many were young

employees (or unpaid volunteers, rather) of diverse NGOs and embassies. Some others reminded me strongly of this particular type of junior scholar (usually studying at the Centre for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies at the American University of Beirut), who were themselves aspiring future participants in the genre at focus, namely, 'Hizbollah scholarship.'

Paul's posture and words clearly signalled a leading role in the organization of the event, which he described as a response to the "slight outpouring of comments" that "questioned Hizbollah's discourse." These comments, delivered within the context of the Damascus assassination by "commentators, pundits and scholars," seemed to suggest that the latter "have gone astray and perhaps misjudged the diversions of Hizbollah's language" during the different periods of its history. As James, the co-organizer, clarified later on, the event was designed partly to restore confidence in the 'Hizbollah scholarship', which had been fiercely attacked by the D.C.-based MESH experts.

Within a climate of generalized suspicion, energized by an assassination most probably conducted by intelligence services of another state, the declared aims sounded quite ambitious. In fact, it was also this same climate that eventually contributed to the event's blatant failure. The following points speak to the extent of its failure: First, in terms of participation, Paul informed us at the very outset that the two major scholars on Hizbollah (with their own books about the party), as well as Hizbollah's most known intellectual (and director of its think tank in the Beirut district of Dahiyeh), declined the invitation to speak at the event.[130] Second, and much to Paul's disappointment, the ensuing discussion did not expand to include "the Western discourse in regard to Islamist movements." Instead, the journalists mostly debated the academic performance of the 'Hizbollah scholarship', while the Lebanese academics spent their time disagreeing on the

[130] These absences were filled up by the Lebanese professors, one of whom admitted openly that he was informed about the topic only minutes before the beginning of the panel! The second academic was described to me by a colleague as the 'quote Arab,' who serves as the legitimization of the panel through the presence of a 'local.'

year that Hizbollah was established.[131] Finally, in the Q&A section, two Lebanese participants from the audience directly questioned the rationale behind the event:

> Q: You are holding Hizbollah scholars to another level than to the rest of the world (…) Do the Israelis reveal their chief of intelligence services?
>
> Chair: It is important to know what happened.. (…)
>
> Reply: Is social history of that period not important? There is no scholarship about that period of Lebanese history…

Indeed, Paul himself admitted failure in his closing remarks, in which he stated that "the level of ignorance about Hizbollah" after the discussion remained as high as it was before.[132] Yet, I would suggest to go beyond these failures, and focus on the important fact that in their defense of 'Hizbollah scholarship,' Paul and the other panellists were suggesting that this kind of knowledge may play a decisive role in the "endless play of chicken and egg," i.e. the struggle between Western governments and Islamist parties in the Middle East and the possible ways towards peace.

Yet, as we will see, Paul's approach is not the exclusive property of a certain ideological camp, say 'the liberal', nor is there a single way to apply it. On the contrary, what I suggest to call the *circulation approach* can be easily adopted by the most diverse actors, adjusted in the most

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[131] For example, the chair had announced that the main sources of an emerging 'Hizbollah scholarship' throughout the 1980's were Israeli military and intelligence agencies. The U.S. journalist countered that "today, however, there is a lot of ambiguity, but little knowledge, also due to the fact that many academics have taken sides matching the more general polarization." This remark was challenged by the second US journalist who maintained that "academics and journalists have done quite an amazing job." The Lebanese academics consumed most of their time arguing whether Hizbollah was established in 1978 or in 1985.

[132] Comments of Lebanese friends and colleagues of mine concurred that the panel offered very little in the way of new knowledge to informed people in Lebanon. A Lebanese friend said: "All these discussions are actually taking place away from Lebanese audiences. No Lebanese attend because the quality of information provided is even lower than that of a newspaper."

unexpected contexts and used in the most imaginative ways, and in the service of the most globalized struggles, as we will see in the next section.

Circulation: Knowledge Laisser-Passer

> The apparatus of security (…) 'lets things happen'. Not that everything is left alone, but *laisser-faire* is indispensable at a certain level. (...) The function of security is to rely on details that are not valued as good or evil in themselves, that are taken to be necessary, inevitable processes, as natural processes in the broad sense, and it relies on these details, which are what they are (...) in order to obtain something that is considered to be pertinent in itself because situated at the level of the population. (Foucault 2009, 45)

In 2008, seven years into the US-led *War on Terror*, the New Yorker published an article on a possible shift in U.S. strategy. Titled 'Knowing the Enemy: Can social scientists redefine the "war on terror"?' (Packer 2008), the piece was largely a portrait of a certain David Kilcullen, who, before joining the U.S. government's global counter-insurgency, had served as a captain in West Java for the Australian Army in 1993, and as an intelligence officer for the Australian government in her own War on Terror in Southeast Asia. In 2004, at the invitation of Paul Wolfowitz, then Deputy Secretary of Defense in the Bush administration, Kilcullen contributed to the Pentagon's *Quadrennial Defense Review*, a statement of department policy and priorities. A year later, he was the author of an influential U.S. Army manual called 'Twenty-eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company Level Counterinsurgency,' which was described by military circles as "an ambitious new counterinsurgency field manual - the first in more than two decades- that will shape military doctrine for many years." (ibid., 62). Soon afterwards, Kilcullen was offered a job

as the chief strategist to Henry Crumpton, the Secretary of State's coordinator for counterterrorism.[133]

In the New Yorker, Kilcullen describes the new strategy as "the need to 'disaggregate' insurgencies." His critique of the Bush administration's approach to dealing with terrorism is diplomatically couched: "You don't play to the enemy's global information strategy of making it all one fight." The article's author is perhaps equally careful not to put too critical words in the mouth of his informant, and thus adds: "By speaking of Saddam Hussein, the Sunni insurgency in Iraq, the Taliban, the Iranian government, Hizbollah, and Al Qaeda in terms of one big war, Administration officials and ideologues have made Osama bin Laden's job much easier." (ibid.) Kilcullen argues against the perception of terrorism as a monolithic challenge and of terrorists as a single enemy. "Actually, there are sixty different groups in sixty different countries who all have different objectives. Let's not talk about bin Laden's objectives—let's talk about *your* objectives. How do we solve that problem?" [134]

The solution suggested is what Kilcullen calls an 'armed social science.' The new approach is, first and foremost, guided by the realization that the "battlefields are also regional and local, where the U.S. government has less knowledge," as Crumpton says. In the new counter-insurgency, knowledge is a problem posed in radically different terms, that is, *locally*. This is something that an anthropologist can surely appreciate and, indeed, there is –at least - one involved in the program. Anthropologist and Pentagon consultant, Montgomery McFate, has been making it her "evangelical mission" to get the Department of Defense to understand the importance of "cultural knowledge" (ibid., 64). McFate came to her "mission" after September 11th, when she became "passionate about one issue: the government's need to actually understand

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[133] Crumpton, Kilcullen' boss, was a "highly regarded official" who had supervised C.I.A.'s covert activities in Afghanistan during the 2001 military campaign that overthrew the Taliban. He met Kilcullen in a conference on defense policy in Vermont (ibid.)

[134] Crumpton concurs in the same piece: "It's really important that we define the enemy in narrow terms (…) The thing we should not do is let our fears grow and then inflate the threat. The threat is big enough without us having to exaggerate it."

its adversaries." She believes that the American government needs "a 'granular' knowledge of the social terrains on which it is competing." (ibid.)[135] In the article, McFate offers an insightful contrast between this new approach and the perspective of those she calls the "right-wing Cold Warriors:"

> "Bush's notion of a titanic struggle between good and evil, between freedom and those who hate freedom, recalls the rigid anti-Communism of Whittaker Chambers, William F. Buckley, Jr., and Barry Goldwater. (…) The current avatars of right-wing Cold Warriors, the neoconservatives, have dismissed all Iraqi insurgents as 'dead enders' and 'bad people.' Terms like 'totalitarianism' and 'Islamofascism,' which stir the American historical memory, mislead policymakers into greatly increasing the number of our enemies and coming up with wrongheaded strategies against them. That's not what the insurgents call themselves. If you can't call something by its name—if you can't say, 'This is what this phenomenon is, it has structure, meaning, agency'—how can you ever fight it?" (McFate quoted in Parker, op.cit)

Although McFate's contradistinction seems to differentiate between Cold Warriors and …embedded anthropologists, her colleagues in the *Office for Counter-Insurgency* are less interested in such binaries. In fact, they perceive the new strategy to be even beyond the terms Republican or Democratic, but rather as "a profound shift in mind-set and attitude —not to mention a drastic change in budgetary and bureaucratic priorities" (ibid.).

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[135] Kilcullen told the reporter: "This is fundamentally about the broken relationship between the government and the discipline of anthropology. What broke that relationship is Vietnam. And people still haven't recovered from that." As a result, a complex human understanding of societies at war has been lost. "But it didn't have to be lost," McFate said. During the Second World War, anthropologists such as Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson, Geoffrey Gorer, and Ruth Benedict provided the Allied war effort with essential insights into Asian societies (…) McFate sees herself as reaching back to this tradition of military-academic cooperation (ibid.65). The ethical issues that arise with anthropological involvement in the U.S counter-insurgency under the notorious *Human Terrain Project* have caused a fierce debate in the discipline (Gonzalez 2007; Price 2002; 2008; Selmeski 2007; Sterpka 2007), which nevertheless goes beyond the scope of this chapter.

I suggest that there is a striking similarity between this mindset and what Michel Foucault has described as the 'apparatus of security,' which was popularized by the so-called Physiocrats of 17th century England and France in regards to the problem of the scarcity of wheat (op.cit). Foucault's conceptual approach is helpful, especially if one is not willing to rely on shaky binaries, usually grounded on murky ideological criteria and even murkier moral principles. Instead, it allows for an empirical exploration of the logic at hand, and for the laying out of the particular elements that constitute it. In what follows, I look more specifically at the ways through which some elements are linked together within the logic of circulation. In particular, I look at how knowledge is associated with a certain understanding of production, how perceptions about the contemporary world are filtered through the notion of *risk*, and how the object of the population is assessed through the scientific concept of the 'support of terrorism.'

The uses of knowledge: Production, Circulation, Pressure

If conquest depicts knowledge as that kind of information that is mostly of military nature and war-related (and which concerns almost exclusively the enemy and, therefore. belongs solely and secretly to the sovereign), circulation understands knowledge in both a more inclusive and a less secretive manner. In fact, the knowledge that really counts is regarded that should be open to the public, accessible to all, and relatively easy to obtain. For example, in stating the inadequacy of the "government's traditional approach," Kilcullen notes that "the intelligence agencies habitually rely on satellites and spies, when most of the information that matters now, is 'open source' — available to anyone with an Internet connection" (Packer op.cit). Similarly, the controversy over Hizbollah scholarship unfolded mainly around the issue of the 'local knowledge,' whose defenders regarded as being accessible to almost everyone.

Overall, the logic of circulation puts in place a very particular idea in regards to the *uses* of knowledge. Arguably, for that kind of knowledge to work properly, it has to go through three main phases: local production, trans-local circulation, and application as a means of pressure at

the level of decision-making on global issues. In the first phase, the providers of knowledge must have a special relationship with the locality involved: they must be either *natives* themselves – hence the importance of the 'quote Arab' in the event described above, or they must have *gone native* – hence the crucial role of the anthropologists in the counter-insurgency. Another example for this from the sphere of the think tank: In a conference organized in Beirut by a Washington-based peace think tank, which has one of its main branches in Beirut, a number of regional experts were invited to speak on the political situation of the Middle East. Each of these presentations had a similar format, which postulated the 'View From …' (the country in focus, e.g. Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, Iran etc.).[136] Tellingly, the head of the think tank in Beirut delivered the opening speech, whose title was 'A Regional System,' thus delineating the hierarchically organized knowledge production within the organization.

The second phase – translocal dissemination – is extremely important within the logic of circulation. This is why peace and crisis think tanks often understand themselves as the crucial intermediaries between local crises/conflicts and policy making at the global level. The effective, i.e. free and widespread, circulation of knowledge translocally is thus perceived as the adequate response to the identified problem that regards those at the top of the decision-making scala as without access to accurate and substantial knowledge on local conflicts. Since those at the top have a dominant say in the local politics of conflicts, it appears self-evident to think tankers that the former must have at their disposal as much accurate local knowledge about the latter as possible. In this sense, the peace think tank positions itself as the middleman, if not the translator, at a translocal level, whose primary aim is to keep the knowledge running in a very specific direction, that is from *local* context to *global* policy. It, thus, channels the knowledge provided by the think tank's *local informant*s to levels that the latter cannot usually reach. In this sense, think

[136] However, 'The View from Syria' and 'The View from Turkey' were presented by two experts who lived in D.C. and worked for the Brookings Institution. In this case, a title such as 'the view *of* Syria/Turkey *from* D.C.' would have been more accurate.

tanks are institutionalized networks of perpendicular knowledge-relay, as one high ranking member of a crisis think tank in New York City told me:

> "In terms of the added value of the International Crisis Group, I think the main and less controversial recognized added value is knowledge. There's a lot of knowledge. In sixteen years we published 1000 reports on 78 different conflict situations. (…) It goes deeper than news articles – maybe not as deep as academic research, but it's very, very current and gives a snapshot of the dynamics of the conflict and the agendas of the various actors. (..) In a lot of places, the primary source of information is interviews, first-hand interviews, which is quite difficult to access. For the journalists, it's their job to do it, they have to look for this kind of information, but in many places today, newspapers do not have the resources to cover and they don't (…) So, when we are somewhere, we can give some deeper analysis …. That is our researched product. (F.H. Interview, New York, October 2011).

Yet, what kind of *local knowledge* is this? What kind of *information* does it include? Arguably, in the third and last phase, the use of knowledge appears to be somewhat automatic. After it has been locally produced and trans-locally disseminated, it is expected to function properly and without much external manipulation as a compelling means of pressure for the decision-makers at the top. In fact, this is the major idea behind the very creation of the *International Crisis Group*, as F.H. says:

> NK – (So you perceive) publication (of local information) as form of pressure?
>
> FH – Yes, the accountability tool too. (…) one of the two reasons why ICG was created was the genocide. In the case of the Rwanda genocide if you look at the way that the decision-making process took place, (you can see that) there was (enough) information. (…) (it) was reported to New York, (and) the Department of Peace-

Keeping Mission Operations supposedly sent it to the Security Council and the Security Council had information to various degrees; the French, the Americans, the British had certainly some degree of information. (…) So the point that I'm trying to make is that it's not that we didn't have information before ICG, there was a way of getting the information (…) *It's the question of public pressure on governments who are supposed to be accountable to the voters to act in the right way,* not to withdraw the UN peace-keeping mission. (…) This is what initiated organizations like ICG because *the information was there, but it was not in the public*. *If the public had known* that there was a genocide in preparation*, they would have put pressure on their government* to do the right thing to stop the genocide or to keep the troops there or to do more. *So, it's information and analysis and the diffusion to the public that creates the public constituency that can put pressure on the governments to do the right thing.* That's the principle.

(F.H. Interview, New York, October 2011, emphasis added). [137]

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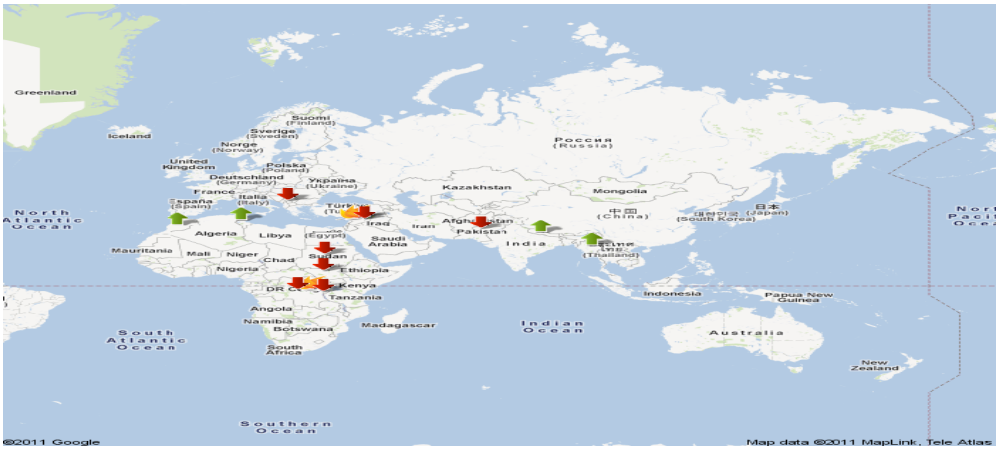
[137] It's worth continuing F.H's elaborate explanations in the footnote: "Our knowledge is more current than academic papers. Our purpose is not knowledge necessarily, it's political action. The politicians, the policy makers don't act on academic papers that reflect twenty years of history. They act on the news, they act on the situation itself. That's the idea for us. The currency is important for us and that we access places that are difficult to access. So, when you do interviews of rebels (as in my case) in the bush – I had to find where they were, I had to find a way to get to them in a safe manner and make sure I covered my back. So, it's not easy to find these people. And also the kind of questions we ask. We are supposed to be experts of the situation. So, they are very precise, targeted questions that journalists sometimes would not think of. Because we know the place/the scene/the people/the networks/ why so and so made such and such statement/ what it means in the global context and so on. I think that are questions are very fine-tuned. And then we have the resources to do it, not an enormous amount of resources, but more resources than the basic academic researcher. We can take …..., we can travel a little bit, we have money to do that. I think the resources also make a difference. In the end, the added value is to compensate for the loss of coverage by the international media. Not only loss of coverage, but also loss of depth. We provide a very documented, factual account of human history and we provide analysis and policy recommendations that are more creative. To the point that some embassies, cut and paste the analysis and sometimes the recommendations. And then… it's the public exposure of some failures of the international community. We keep an account, we keep them on watch. Whether that makes a fundamental difference I don't know. But there's a bit more transparency, the US doesn't care but smaller countries care about their reputation and people care about their reputation". (F.H. Interview)

This is a pretty straight-forward explanation of the idea behind how knowledge (in the sense of information about crimes, genocides or terror acts that are actually happening "on the ground") is released into circulation as a means of pressure. In the case of Rwanda, F.H. says, there *was* information about the intended genocide, but the problem was that it was not public and accessible to the public constituencies of governments. The credo goes: *If their people knew*, the governments would be pressured to 'do the right thing'. This is a crucial function of knowledge within the logic of circulation, namely, its quasi-automatic function as a powerful political tool of pressure. Yet, in order for it to function as such, knowledge must be analyzed and presented in some very particular ways.

A world *at risk*

It seems that for knowledge to be effective as a wake-up call for immediate political action on impeding crises at a global level, it must be accordingly articulated within a calculable image of *risk*. I suggest that this is a crucial link that occurs under the logic of circulation: between an image of the globe divided into 'critical regions,' and increasingly quantified understandings of 'risk.' In order to assess the image of a world at risk, these critical cases are placed under different forms of surveillance that seek to produce a general and measurable state of alertness. The constant input of relevant information into fixed time-frames would then make possible an output in the form of an observatory of global crisis. This is the ambition of the ICG's 'Crisis Watch' map, for example.



Map 5.1 ICG Crisis Watch no. 100, Autumn 2011

Source: ICG website

On this map, the 'critical regions' are depicted with the help of green and red arrows, and with little fire flares, designating "improved" and "deteriorated situations," and "conflict risk alerts," respectively.[138]

In *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault shows how quantitative analyses of smallpox in terms of success and failure in 17th century France had the effect of making the disease appear as a "distribution of cases in a population circumscribed in time or space." (2009, 60). The notion of 'case' is crucial here, because it is not constituted as a mere individual situation, but is placed within a grid of identifiable, quantifiable, and comparable *critical cases*. This seems to be the logic that permeates the *Crisis Watch*. Every local researcher functions essentially as an 'early warning mechanism' in her respective locality. She has to identify instances of impeding crisis and then report them to the HQ. This happens on a monthly basis, as Robert, local researcher for a global crisis think tank in Lebanon told me:

> P: "OK, we have something called the Crisis Watch! It's a monthly report dedicated to measure the crises, the evolution of crises in the world. Its like a thermometer, a

[138] Not all sins are negative though. Indeed, there is a fourth symbol in the ICG inventory, namely a dove, which delineates possible 'Conflict Resolution Opportunities'. Yet, doves are very rarely seen in ICG Crisis Watches.

> *political thermometer*, a product of crisis group.(It) is the most read among the analysts and the diplomats. It includes 10 lines on each country, and then a very general assessment of the Crisis Group on the situation to come.. to get better or worse. An arrow going up and down... the summary is done by the editors in Brussels... so every end of the month I have to do… no sorry, it didn't go completely like that.. every month we have to submit the situation report. It is an internal product, where we just talk about all the people we have met and where we present the resume of the activities…
>
> (Robert Interview, Beirut 2008, emphasis added)

Arguably, this "political thermometer" divides the world into cold and hot zones, and then the hot zones into zones of lower risk and zones of higher risk. The idea is then to be able to predict the sudden transformation of the former towards the latter and, finally, the eruptions of crises, conflicts, violence etc. Thus, the Crisis Watch not only makes the *world at risk* a quantifiable and presentable feature, but also identifies critical turning points. In other words, it monitors, measures and indeed manufactures the imaginary of *crisis* in a very particular sense, namely as "the phenomenon of sudden, circular bolting that can only be checked either by a higher, natural mechanism, or by an artificial mechanism" (Foucault, op.cit.). It is arguably this artificial mechanism, this artificial *political thermometer* that the International Crisis Group aspires to be. A global device of conflict surveillance, which seeks to be in the position of power not only to identify the risk of each critical case to turn crucial, but also to define the notions of risk and crisis altogether.

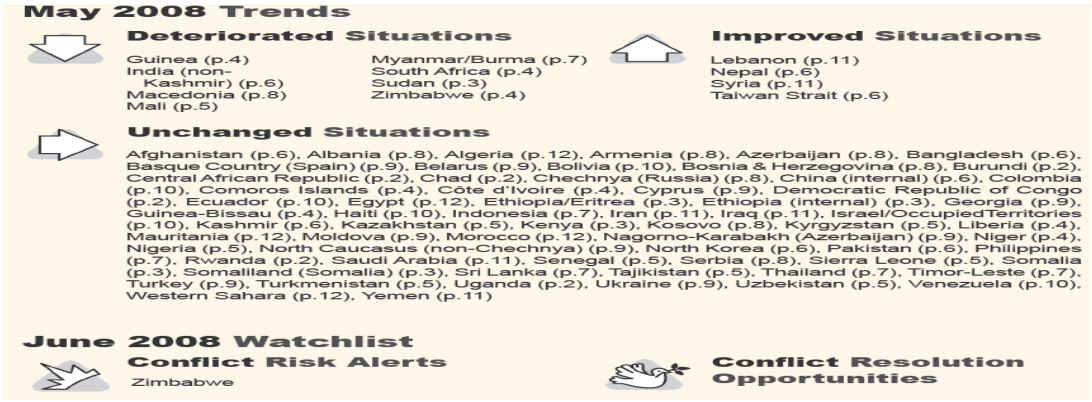


Figure 5.1 May 2008 "Trends"

Source: ICG website

Arguably, the logic of circulation makes overviews like the one presented above (fig. 5.1) particularly instrumental. Note here not only the choice of the word 'trends', but also the size of paper (half A4 page), onto which the current assessment is made to fit. Such mechanisms belong, so to speak, to a radically different logic of power altogether, namely, what Foucault has called *discipline* (1995). Needless to say, both sets of logics (circulation and discipline or surveillance) can easily and most of the time do, in fact, co-exist. In the case of the *Crisis Watch*, for example, it appears extremely difficult to discern the limits of one logic vis-à-vis the other. And it seems that, especially after 9/11, it becomes difficult to distinguish between the task of surveillance of potential crises and the monitoring of "violent Islamists." This blurring was articulated in precise terms by ICG's previous President during a presentation at Beirut's American University:

> "Crisis Group's real strength comes from our detailed local knowledge of particular local situations, and our capacity to force policymakers to sit up and take notice of the implications of that analysis. One of the many areas in which that approach has won favourable reviews has been our reporting on one particular stream of genuinely violent Islamism in South East Asia, the Jemaah Islamiyah movement, which has regularly been described by senior Western intelligence officials as 'gold standard.' But then, knowing what we now know about the performance of major Western intelligence agencies, that's perhaps not these days quite the compliment it might once have been."

(Gareth Evans, Talk in A.U. Beirut, 2008, fieldnotes)

Hence, it would be perhaps more accurate to say that within the logic of circulation, mechanisms of surveillance and discipline can be deployed next to one another. This does not necessarily change the overall approach to terrorism as a problem of local knowledge production and free circulation, even if one has to *compete* with more enclosed forms of intelligence for that.

The Population's ‚Support for Terrorism'

> As soon as the recent fighting in Lebanon between Hizbollah and Israeli troops had ended, Hizbollah marked, with its party flags, houses that had been damaged. Kilcullen said, "That's not a reconstruction operation—*it's an information operation. It's influence*. They're going out there to send a couple of messages. To the Lebanese people they're saying, 'We're going to take care of you.' To all the aid agencies it's like a dog pissing on trees: they're saying, 'We own this house—don't you touch it.' " (Packer op.cit, emphasis added)

The experts of the new counter-insurgency strategy view the War on Terror as, first and foremost, a question of knowledge, information, and influence. According to Kilcullen, the population of South Lebanon, which is Hizbollah's stronghold, should not be regarded as an inseparable and self-evident part of the enemy and his territory, but as an object open to influence, and, therefore, to political struggle over it. Population is, the counterinsurgents say, an object of politics, influence and, ultimately, of knowledge. Instead of perceiving the people of South Lebanon as a monolithic body of Hizbollah followers, both reality and strategy point to the need of differentiation between variable categories and degrees of support for Hizbollah in the region. Arguably, this shift has a number of practical consequences, since the object of the population enters a radically different conceptual sphere. For instance, it is perceived as divided into diverse

groups according to the degree of influence of or, in other words, their *support* for Hizbollah. In that sense, *influence* and *support* turn into objects of calculation, they can be rendered calculable.

This 'character of calculability' (cf. Mitchell 2002b) introduces a crucial departure from a legalistic (and moralistic) division of the enemy population between *militants* - that can be killed - and *civilians* - that must be spared. This differentiation is notoriously based on the moral question of who bears the arms to fight. Now, *civilians* are not necessarily defined as the antithesis of the militants, but instead as a mass that is differentiated according to grades of support to the militants. Whether this shift has tremendous consequences in the number of 'civilians' killed in contemporary wars, (as in the Israeli military campaign against Hizbollah in 2006 has demonstrated see, Achcar and Warschawski 2007; Hovsepian 2007) is difficult to say.

Yet, this change further complicates the image of both populations involved, i.e. one's own and one's opponent. Now, they are not constituted as principally antithetical and inherently coherent, but as comprising of different types of subjects towards which a variety of approaches can be followed. Thus, some parts of these populations can be influenced (e.g. through politics), others lured (e.g. through privileges), some intimidated (e.g. through pressure), others convinced (through arguments), some coerced (through structural violence) and others killed (through physical violence). In Kilcullen's words, this delineates… :

> "..a ladder of extremism that shows the progress of a jihadist. At the bottom is the vast population of mainstream Muslims, who are potential allies against radical Islamism as well as potential targets of subversion, and whose grievances can be addressed by political reform. The next tier up is a smaller number of 'alienated Muslims,' who have given up on reform. Some of these join radical groups (…) They require 'ideological conversion'—that is, counter-subversion (…) A smaller number of these individuals, already steeped in the atmosphere of radical mosques and extremist discussions, end up joining local and regional insurgent cells (…) With these insurgents, the full range of counterinsurgency tools has to be used, including violence and persuasion. The very

> small number of fighters who are recruited to the top tier of Al Qaeda and its affiliated terrorist groups are beyond persuasion or conversion. 'They're so committed you've got to destroy them,' Kilcullen said. 'But you've got to do it in such a way that you don't create new terrorists.' (Packer, op.cit)[139]

It seems that the image of a population that consists of different tiers in relation to "support for terrorism" opens up a field of new possibilities not only for armies, but also for scholars and experts alike. Much of this scholarly investigation is organized around the analytical concept of 'public support for terrorism,' which is a common theme within terrorism studies. In these studies, the analytical question against which 'populations' are measured is the following: *Who supports terrorism?* (Fair and Shepherd 2006). Tellingly, this strand of research is often contrasted to the most common research question within bona fide terrorism studies, namely: *who is the terrorist*. I would attribute the latter to the conquest approach, while the former to the circulation approach. Let's look at a paradigmatic case of this kind of study. Published by the *United States Institute of Peace* (Ethan 2007), this working paper seeks to identify the "correlates of public support for terrorism in the Muslim World." In the introduction, the author justifies his inquiry with the insertion that "public opinion and public support play a vital role in the politics of terrorism," especially because many terrorist organizations depend on the "support of a surrounding population." This support makes it possible for the terrorists to "raise funds, recruit volunteers, operate safe houses, or avoid infiltration and capture by a militarily stronger government." (ibid.3).

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[139] To be sure, not everyone in support of what I call the 'circulation' approach subscribes to Kilcullen's suggested ways to deal with the different tiers among "radical Muslims," especially in regards to the most "committed" ones. Yet, the logic of classifying the object into different categories, which are then subject to a varied approach seems to be a common feature. For example, in the annual meeting of peace mediators in Oslo, a speaker asked the dozens of participants if they would *speak to* the Palestinian political party *Hamas*. Almost everyone raised their hands. Then, the speaker asked the same question about *Al-Qaida* and almost no one did raise a finger. According to the person who told me this story, a mediator and crisis expert herself, *Hamas* is considered to possess political rationality, while *Al Qaida* is not.

In general, the findings of the survey are quantified and correlated data taken from the 2002 *Pew Global Attitudes Survey*.[140] In the original survey, conducted in fourteen countries with "large Muslim populations," Pew asked 'Muslim respondents' the following question: *Some people think that suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilian targets are justified in order to defend Islam from its enemies. Other people believe that, no matter what the reason, this kind of violence is never justified. Do you personally feel that this kind of violence is often justified to defend Islam, sometimes justified, rarely justified, or never justified?*

Lebanon tops the countries investigated in the 'average support for terrorism' (see table 5.1).

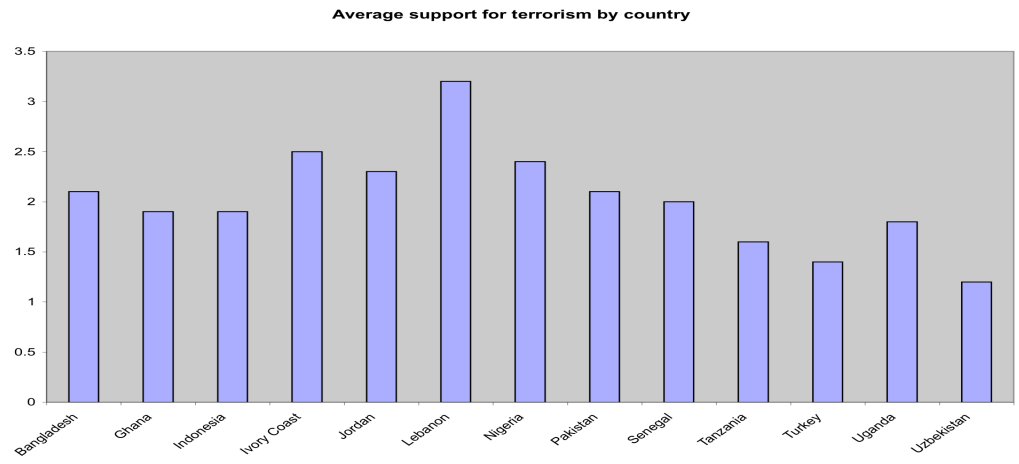

Table 5.1 "Average Support for Terrorism by country"

Source: Ethan 2007

The author states that in Lebanon "the average person supports terror somewhere between 'often' and 'sometimes'" (ibid. 4-5). It is not my intention to submit the 'study' to any substantial analysis in terms of empirical analysis or its overall use of categories and concepts. I would only note an aspect that can be regarded perhaps in relation to the argument that I make in this chapter. While the Pew question regarding the support of "suicide bombing" is clearly posed in terms of the division between civilian and non-civilian, in the article the responses are analyzed within a radically different conceptual framework, in which the binary is eliminated. Instead, the

[140] According to the author, this survey was conducted in 44 countries and asked a broad array of questions about people's attitudes toward politics, economics, religion, globalization, the United States, the War on Terror, etc. (ibid.4).

"population" is classified into diverse groups according to a quantifiable support for terrorism, which seems to transcend the question of *who bears the arms* and, thus, the ethical limit of who is morally allowed to be killed in a given military operation.

Actuarial Devices, in Circulation

Dear Mrs. Nadine XXX,

I would like to invite you to participate in a one-day seminar (…). The topic of the conference is the relationship between Iran and Hizbollah and will be hosted by the Army Directed Studies Office (…). This seminar will feature 8-10 subject matter experts comprised of military and civilian backgrounds. (…) We believe your background and expertise make you a valuable contributor to our project. The conference will be non-attribution and we ask that you not disclose the subject or nature of the conference. The Army Directed Studies Office was established by the Army Chief of Staff to provide in depth analysis of complex issues facing the United States Army. In an attempt to gain a wider perspective on issues and movements, we regularly collaborate with subject matter experts from academia, industry and various government agencies. This unclassified input is a vital component in our overall analysis and is folded into a product that is then presented to the Army's senior leadership. We appreciate your expertise and are prepared to provide you with an honorarium for your services. (…) I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely, XXX Colonel, United States Army Director, Army Directed Studies Office

(fieldnotes)

This invitation was sent to Nadine, a Lebanese national, who - by all accounts - is a significant author within what the experts described above call the 'Hizbollah scholarship'.[141] It was in this capacity that the U.S. Army believed that her "background and expertise" make her "a valuable contributor" to its project, which is, alas, not disclosed in this letter. To be sure, similar reasons made Nadine an attractive candidate for the position of the 'Iran analyst' in the Beirut branch of a Washington D.C.HQ-ed peace think tank. When I first met her in late 2007, she was still working for that same peace think tank.

Her story of the involvement with the peace think tank is illuminating. When she returned to Lebanon from her studies abroad, she had a relatively difficult time finding a good academic job within academia in Lebanon: "They call you miss, and they pay you nothing," she told me scornfully. Within a short time, however, she was "discovered" by a German party foundation, which invited her on a 'think-tank trip' to the United States. In Washington D.C., she gave talks and presentations to many think tanks and government institutions, such as the United States Institute of Peace, the Saban Center, the Carnegie Endowment for Peace, and others. In a dinner with other scholars and experts, Nadine sat next to an influential U.S. expert on Middle East policy. When he asked her about Hizbollah's armed presence in South Lebanon, which he obviously did not approve of, Nadine responded that "Hizbollah's weapons keep her moderate." The expert left the room in anger, and – according to Nadine – "the Arabs" present congratulated her for her courageous utterances. She told me that this statement, as well as her good contacts with Hizbollah, prompted the Middle East program director of the think tank to pressure the Board of Trustees to employ her.[142] The director pulled strings right and left and finally got Nadine on board, who began working just weeks after the 2006 war between Hizbollah and Israel. During the war, she gave at least 300 interviews to local and international media, while

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[141] Nadine forwarded the invitation to me, with permission to include it in my study, which she very much supported and welcomed. Nadine holds a PhD in Islamic Studies from a West-European university. She wrote her dissertation on Hizbollah.

[142] The major issue was the rule that no second Lebanese –apart from the director - should be employed by the think tank.

continuing to write articles and prepare a book for publication on the relationship between Iran and Hizbollah. "It was a crazy time," Nadine told me, "I neglected my kids… I felt I was going mad."[143] Arguably, bringing Nadine on board brought the peace think tank even closer to both Hizbollah and the *literature* on it. Her task was to produce reports on the party and its relationship with its allies in the region, Iran and Syria.

In the literature, think tanks are often perceived – mostly by their proponents - as those structures that help "to bridge the gap between knowledge and policy" (McGann 2007, 2). In Lebanon, skeptics often employed rather sarcastic labels to describe what they saw as think tanks' blatant failure to influence public policy and state leaders. For instance, one experienced Lebanese academic-cum-politician called them the 'eunuchs of the palace' (Interview Nadime Shehadi, Beirut 2008).

In general, the literature on think tanks conceptualizes the latter as a particular kind of hybrid entity.[144] Either as an interstitial space between the state and the civil society, or a link between knowledge and policy, the think tank is mostly understood as a certain kind of a *hybrid space*. I argue against this depiction, and instead, I suggest to perceive the peace think tank as an 'actuarial device' (Hacking 1984), primarily devoted to the calculation of probabilities of crisis eruption. And instead of addressing questions of failure or success, as much of the literature does,

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[143] Yet, wars such as these appear utterly crucial in the making of experts on peace and crisis in the Middle East. During a think tank conference on the Middle East in Berlin, I asked a German expert: 'what makes a good peace expert'. Her answer was, '(to be in) the right war in the right moment'. In a somewhat similar vein, Johnson calls the ongoing conflict in the Middle East "both a curse and a blessing for think tanks" (Johnson 2002, 347).Wars, Johnson writes, make the "dire need for advice of how to solve these problems" seem evident and thus the existence of think tanks becomes as a sine qua non part of the solution which he nevertheless considers "unlikely" (ibid.).

[144] Ivan Krastev notes that "a think tank is something everybody hears about, but nobody studies" (Krastev 2000:274). The literature on think tanks is wary of providing a stable definition of a think tank. As one overview book notes, one of the most difficult tasks in the analysis of such organizations is to establish clear boundaries as to which organizations fit within the category (Stone, Denham, and Garnett 1998). The literature on the subject is replete with efforts to propose the most suitable framework for categorizing different think tank types. In most of the cases though, different versions of hybridity are put forward.

I would suggest to focus on the function of the think tank as an actuarial device that exercises surveillance over those political entities that are regarded as militant, extremist, terrorist.

This perspective was made clear to me by Nadine, but also by Robert, a researcher for another global peace and crisis think tank. Robert was the think tank's 'local researcher,' based in Beirut. While Nadine's *passport* to the world of the think tank was her study of and her contacts to Hizbollah, Robert's was his work on the Sunni *Muslim Brotherhood* of Egypt. In fact, his first contact with the think tank was established in a conference, in which both state security experts and academicians participated. Robert was subsequently invited to write a report for the think tank, which opened the way for his employment:

> "In the middle of 2005, I was invited to a conference on Islamic Movements or a thing like that in Paris, where two people of the (think tank's name) were present at that time. ... they called me and they asked me to write a report on Islamist movements in France. There was a program of studying the Islamist movements in three countries, France, Germany and England, I think. So, I sent the report, it went fine. They told me come with us, and join us and go whenever you want, in the arabic world. I was a little bit lost at the beginning, so I went to the North (of Lebanon) to find my Sunni groups and I began to work there for one month and a half and they agreed OK, Islamist groups in the North. They want me to focus on Salafism, Jihadism, such a thing."
>
> (Robert Interview, Beirut 2008)

Further, it is important to note that the researchers are often expected to shift their interests according to the priorities of the think tank. Thurayya, an Egyptian female researcher at another international peace think tank in Beirut, expressed her frustration with the decision of the Middle East Program Manager in D.C. to have Thurayya focus her work on 'Islamist women:'

> "I was not in the topic of Islamist women. I am not a feminist, I was more interested in issues of poverty, equality and development. Actually I was a journalist for many

> years and there is where I am going after (the think tank) I guess. … But our boss, (her female boss, based in D.C.) thought that it would be a good idea if I write about it. So, this is how I started."
>
> (Thurayya, interview, Beirut 2008)

The peace think tank thus might be understood as an essential mechanism, which enables new uses of knowledge in relation to current crises and conflicts under the logic of circulation. As I have shown so far, it is both a device of surveillance on unruly entities and hybrid groups (such as Hezbollah, Salafists, "Islamist women"), as well as an actuarial device organized around certain notions of *risk*. In this sense, both the think tank per se, as well as the think tank researcher, can be said to be mere *institutionalized extensions* of the think tank report; they are part of an 'assemblage' (Latour 2005) that aims at the local production and the trans-local circulation of knowledge on risk, crisis and the Other.

Note, for example, how the position of a new 'Lebanon Analyst' is described in the job ad for a crisis think tank:

> Based in Beirut, and working closely with other members of the Middle East team, the Analyst/Senior Analyst will research and produce reports on security, conflict, political, governance, and social issues related to Lebanon, *analysing long and short-term challenges to the country's stability*, *identifying ways of increasing the capacity and will of governments to support more effectively internal and regional stability*, and developing practical recommendations which will be pressed upon all relevant actors. The successful candidate will possess a combination of excellent field research skills with sophisticated analysis, academic rigour, fluid writing and a grasp of policy issues. (fieldnotes, emphasis added)

Despite the rather general style in which the future tasks of the Beirut-based analyst are described, the focus on 'stability' cannot be overlooked. Hence, to contribute to the country's stability, the analyst must function as a particular type of an actuarial device, whose main task is

to "identify" and to "analyse challenges" to the country's *stability*, as well as the *ways* to increase the capacity of *governments* to support it. Keeping stability a vague and undefined notion, in the conventional jargon of contemporary expertise those challenges are mostly identified with the generic term 'non-state actors' (s. Chapter Two for more on state-centric perceptions of expertise).

Can the *report* speak? The End of Circulation

"Dear all:

A few weeks ago we sent out a memo outlining the policy toward the translation and posting of publications on the Arabic website. The memo stated that only Westend (think tank name altered) publications get automatically translated and posted. Writings by Westend staff in other publications will not automatically be translated and posted. Instead, they will be subject to review. *We are now extending this policy to postings on the English website. Jerry and I will decide each time whether an article published outside Westend will be posted. We are doing this to make sure that we do not post articles and papers that do not meet our publication standards.* We welcome and encourage you to publish outside Westend, since this is a way of reaching different audiences. Given the varying standards journals apply in accepting publications, however, we will not give all articles the Westend imprint by putting them on our website. Kathy is no longer authorized to post material on the website until Jerry and I have reviewed them. Please send articles you would like to see posted to Jerry and me, not to her.

All the best, Elizabeth"

(Fieldnotes, Beirut)

Contrary to the Army invitation above, this think tank internal email was not sent exclusively to Nadine.[145] Yet, she was the principal reason behind her boss's decision to introduce new forms of "censorship", as Nadine described them to me. This move initiated a series of confrontations between Nadine and Elizabeth, which arguably culminated in the latter's decision to fire Nadine. For the latter, the controversy revolves around the notion of "publication standards." How does she define these standards, though?

In a personal email to Nadine some days later, Elizabeth explains that the reason for the removal of the publications from the think tank's website was that they were "potentially harmful to the standing of the organization." Elizabeth goes on at length to describe the role of the think tank as one to provide studies that are "balanced and incisive," in order to be of use to "many audiences in the Middle East, the United States and Europe." She then proceeds to describe Nadine's scholarship as falling out of this schema: "Your articles were marked by a strong political viewpoint, i.e. they embraced entirely the perspective of Hizbollah." By taking the position of one of the political players, Nadine endangered the credibility of the organization and thus its ability to influence policy making in the West: "In order to have an impact, we need to maintain our credibility," writes Elizabeth. She reiterates the crucial importance of providing what she regards as impartial and accurate information, a task that she sees as resolutely antithetical to any embracement of the views of the political parties involved. To illustrate this point, she cites the example of how the think tank dealt with Islamist movements. While trying to convince "US policy makers of the necessity of dealing" with these movements, the think tank has been critical of the latter.

In the end, Elizabeth describes what lies at the core of her discomfort: "We have gone as far as we can possibly go in giving space on our website to the unchallenged views of Hizbollah." This is a straight-forward statement, in which Nadine is practically identified with Hizbollah. Indeed, Elizabeth claims to be "getting questions from people who have met (Nadine) in Beirut as to why

[145] This email, as well as the following cited here, were forwarded to me by Nadine. She kept them in her personal archive and she gave me the permission to use them in my dissertation.

(they) employ a person who appears to speak for Hizbollah." To her, Nadine is not anymore the scholar *on* Hizbollah, but the scholar *of* Hizbollah.[146] As such, she is thought incapable of fulfilling the think tank's mission, namely, the provision of neutral information on militant Islamist movements. By failing to do this, the think tank not only provides "too much space" for the latter to advertise their views, but also allows for most of them to go unchallenged. Finally, Elizabeth demands a "moratorium on writing about Hizbollah".

This, I submit, signals the end of the logic of circulation and of the regime of knowledge that I have been describing as *laisser faire*. Elizabeth clearly misjudged the ability of the think tank to make use of Nadine as an effective scholar on Hizbollah that could help disseminate information on the latter. Instead of functioning as an actuarial device for the surveillance of the unruly Other, Nadine reversed the terms of the engagement, threatening the entire ground upon which the logic of circulation was built in the first place. This sounded alarm to the headquarters and the decision was taken to address this threat by firing Nadine. The end of circulation was introduced by a decision made by the think tank's sovereign boss. On the other hand, Nadine was still puzzled by her dismissal after it happened. She cannot understand that the leadership of the think tank were so late in realizing "who they have hired," implying that it was clear to all what her position vis-à-vis Hizbollah was.

Yet, it is obvious that the think tank's open policy met its limits with Nadine. Her story reveals how the think tank's rhetoric of neutrality is invested with the practice of authority. The circulation approach may be advertised as an open policy, but the sovereign appears ready to eliminate any threat to its aspired mission of providing knowledge of the unruly Other. When the

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[146] A telling part of Elizabeth's email to Nadine highlights the 'problem of language' in the latter's articles. Says Elizabeth: 'A good way to be dismissed in Washington is to use expressions such as "American imperialism" as insulting jargon—careful analyses of policies that can be defined imperialist is a different issue. We do not throw around indiscriminately expressions such as terrorist and fascist, either. That is the language of political rallies not of political analysis.' I suggest to frame this claim within my overall argument about the difference between the two approaches (conquest/circulation). Thus, political rallies (following the conquest approach) use the language of harsh expressions indiscriminately, while political analysis (following the circulation approach) refrain from the use of such labels. Yet, Elizabeth will finally use that very same language to fire Nadine.

Other speaks back, the logic of *laisser-faire* is rapidly regressed, and the major response framework once more becomes the decision of the sovereign.

Conclusion: The Implications of Circulation for Humanity

My main argument in this chapter is two-fold. First, I suggested that terrorism be regarded as a particular problem-space, within which certain anthropological questions might be raised. Second, and on the face of this previous assertion, I submitted that the uses of knowledge and expertise deserve additional attention, because their role is immensely crucial in the ways through which pertinent questions about the constitution of humanity in moral, political and technical terms are addressed. Further, I proposed a distinction between two different logics of knowledge within the problem-space of terrorism, which I called *conquest* and *circulation,* respectively. In the first case, knowledge is conceptualized as a weapon of war, while the second configures knowledge as a certain kind of product that must be extracted at the most local level possible, and then it must be allowed to circulate freely in order to have the desired effect on policy making and, in the long run, peacemaking. Finally, I discussed how this new logic creates new objects that are increasingly subjected to the politics of calculation, such as the population, and its 'support' for terrorism. I also showed how this logic introduces new tools for the measurement of impending crises, conflicts, and wars, such as the diverse early warning mechanisms. This regime of knowledge extraction, I argued, constructs a particular image of the 'world at risk.'

As a conclusion to this discussion, I would like to add some further thoughts about the possible implications of such an approach to contemporary practices that seek to constitute humanity in multiple ways. Hence, I suggest that this new logic of knowledge production and circulation might contribute to a radical shift in the ways in which a number of crucial questions, pertaining to the War on Terror for example, are viewed. I submit that this shift is characterized by what one could call an *economization approach*. By this I mean that the criterion according to which

society decides - in the sense of the Greek verb *krino* - on controversial questions, raised within the problem-space of terrorism, is less rooted in moral principles and strategic objectives, rather than in a web of calculations and speculations about the favorable uses of knowledge and information for the achievement of certain goals. Questions about the limits of torture in Guantanamo, for example, or about the constitution of the category of 'the civilian population' in the *War on Terror* at large, are effectively reconfigured, and eventually redefined, in relation to the economics of knowledge extraction. In the words of Kilcullen's boss: "'Instead of turning the prisons into insurgent universities, you could have a systematic process that would be based on scientific surveys designed to elicit certain information on how people joined, who their leaders were, how leadership was exercised, how group cohesion was maintained.' In other words, America would get to know its enemy." (Packer 2008, 68)

Thus, the limit of torture is not anymore posed as a moral question, but merely as an issue of cost-benefit analysis, which is open to different calculations. The controversy is much less about the captive terrorist as a human being that can be subjected to different moral regimes, according to which strand of moral philosophy one follows; The issue becomes, rather, a question of rational calculations as to the effectiveness of torture as a mechanism of knowledge extraction. In other words, if the act of torturing the captive leads to the collection of crucial information about future terror attacks, this must be considered an effective mechanism, and not a moral question. Arguably, the backdoor for this way of thinking is the concept of the 'ticking bomb' in academic discussions (s. Asad 2010, for a critique on the concept). In brief, this approach potentially constitutes humans not as de jure bearers of inalienable rights, but as containers of strategic knowledge that can be extracted. Torture is also not a moral dilemma, but a question of effectiveness in the task of knowledge extraction. The ways a prisoner could be treated are open to calculative assumptions about the potential usefulness of the knowledge that can be extracted from him.

Finally, the notion of the 'population' is transformed in similar ways. The enemy population, for example, is no longer regarded as a clearly defined and territorially bounded entity, which is further divided into combatants and civilians for moral and military reasons. Within the logic of circulation, the population becomes a crucial object of calculation and knowledge. The enemy population may thus produce crucial knowledge, which can be used in a number of ways. This is exemplified in the scientific practice of measuring the population's support for terrorism, for example. I would argue that the implications of this practice are largely underestimated. How could one interpret, for example, the 'finding' that Lebanon tops the list of "Muslim countries" (sic!) in its population's support for terrorism in relation to the tens of hundreds of civilians killed in Israel's war on Lebanon in 2006? In other words, the practice of dividing the population into different categories, according to its support of terrorism, not only reveals previous distinctions between combatants and civilians. It introduces new ways of dividing the population into categories similar to those proposed by Sergeant Kilcullen, namely, between those who can be influenced, and those who must be killed. In either case, all of them will become known.

Epilogue

Research for this project began during the occupation of Beirut's Downtown by thousands of protesters. They demanded the resignation of the Lebanese government, due to what they saw as failure to defend the country against the Israeli military offensive in July 2006. Indeed, the image of a colorful and serene landscape of tents, banners, and posters, bathed in a sandy, artificial light, and spread across a voluminous, open space in the middle of the night, is the very first visual memory I have from Lebanon. The occupation lasted approximately 18 months, and ended in May 2008, when deadly clashes erupted between pro-government and anti-government armed groups. I spent most of this time in Lebanon, observing how experts portrayed the country as engulfed in a constant *crisis,* and how they employed their usual methods of resolution in an effort to instate peace.

This dissertation is being submitted on the first anniversary of the occupation of Cairo's *Tahrir Square* by tens of thousands of protesters on January 25th, 2011. They demanded the resignation of President *Husni Mubarak*, and after they achieved it, they continued to protest for democracy, equality and freedom. These and other protests throughout the Arab World were initially defined as *crisis* situations by CNN, and other global media outlets, but soon this word had to be abandoned in favor of other descriptive terms, such as uprising, revolt, and revolution. In this sense, the Egyptians not only overpowered Mubarak, and his brutal police forces; They also defeated the tacit use of *crisis imaginaries* by diverse experts that sought to define the parameters of the battle by way of diverse discursive practices. One year later, the struggle of the Egyptian people for democracy and freedom goes on. Various experts of politics and media continue unabated to craft straightjackets, and to apply them to these ongoing struggles. To name but one, *The New York Review of Books,* in the January 2012 issue, predicted a 'New Muslim Egypt' (El Rashidi 2012) on its front page.

This dissertation tells a somewhat similar story. In the sense that it is crucially relevant to past and future battles *against* straightjackets, 'black boxes', and the rule of unquestioned labels. Indeed, I understand this dissertation as inseparable from these larger struggles. The story narrated here belongs to an innovative and promising genre that seeks to explore diverse aspects of the *Rule of Experts* (Mitchell 2002) in the contemporary Middle East. The particular aspect that I chose to tackle ethnographically, through this work, is the problem of socio-political violence and the practices of peace and peacemaking in Lebanon.

Granted, most of my protagonists were well-travelled, well-educated and multi-lingual individuals, such as established academics, higher officials at the United Nations, experienced NGO employees, foreign correspondents, think tank researchers, and mediators with professional experience that often extended over few continents and decades. My story played out on stages that were frequently situated behind closed doors, such as academic offices, think tank events, NGO workshops, and UN agencies. Any improvisations that may have featured in this story were attached to well-organized, and long-institutionalized, practices such as the writing of scientific books about violence, the production of elaborate reports about state failure by development agencies, the training of the population in techniques of civility, and the scholarly surveillance of recalcitrant political entities. However, this story is not an ensemble of well-rehearsed monologues by characters who know the script by heart, as well as the best moment to pitch their voice. In fact, quite often the story turns into a farce, the coulisse collapse, and the actors keep forgetting their lines.

This is especially the case in moments when the audience storms the stage and changes the plot in dramatic ways. The uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and elsewhere in the Arab World, were certainly such moments. These revolutions challenged conventional forms and effects of government by both rulers and experts. They imposed new vocabularies, making the former ones obsolete almost over night. They put new images, words, verses, songs, scripts and legacies into circulation. They created new practices and crafted new promises. They designated new stages

and explored new themes. These uprisings, and the visions, the questions and the practices developed within and through them became the new actors, both in the region and the world at large. Indeed, the last lines of this dissertation are written only a few hundred meters away from Zucchotti Park, the central stage of New York's *Occupy Wall Street* movement, which is largely inspired by the Arab revolts.

To be sure, *Mohamed Bouazizi*'s tragic act of self-immolation was not the final act, nor the ultimate catharsis of this global stage, which is currently - once again - only in the making. In the upcoming struggles, the words of Cornelius Castoriadis, (one of the passengers of *Mataroa*, a boat that some decades ago saved a generation of thinkers from the perils of a Civil War not far away from the shores of Egypt, Tunisia and Lebanon) are more relevant than ever:

> "To propose another institution of society is a matter of a political project and political aim, which are certainly subject to discussion and argument, but cannot be 'founded' in any kind of Nature or Reason. Men are born neither free nor unfree, neither equal, nor unequal. We will them to be free and equal (Castoriadis, 1984 328-9).

Undoubtedly, ours is a time to propose another institution of society, and this is ultimately what these struggles do. But how do they transform the relationship between *Democracy* and *Expertise*, *Freedom* and *Nature*, *Politics* and *Reason*? These questions will navigate future explorations.

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